

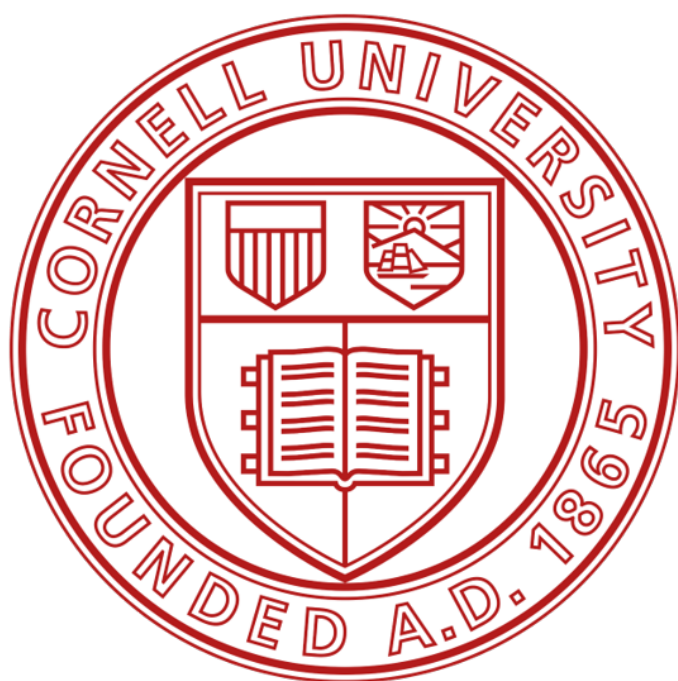


State of Authority

THE STATE IN SOCIETY
IN INDONESIA

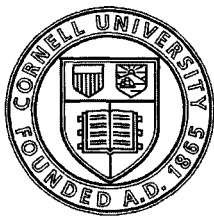
EDITED BY GERRY VAN KLINKEN
AND JOSHUA BARKER

CORNELL SOUTHEAST ASIA PROGRAM

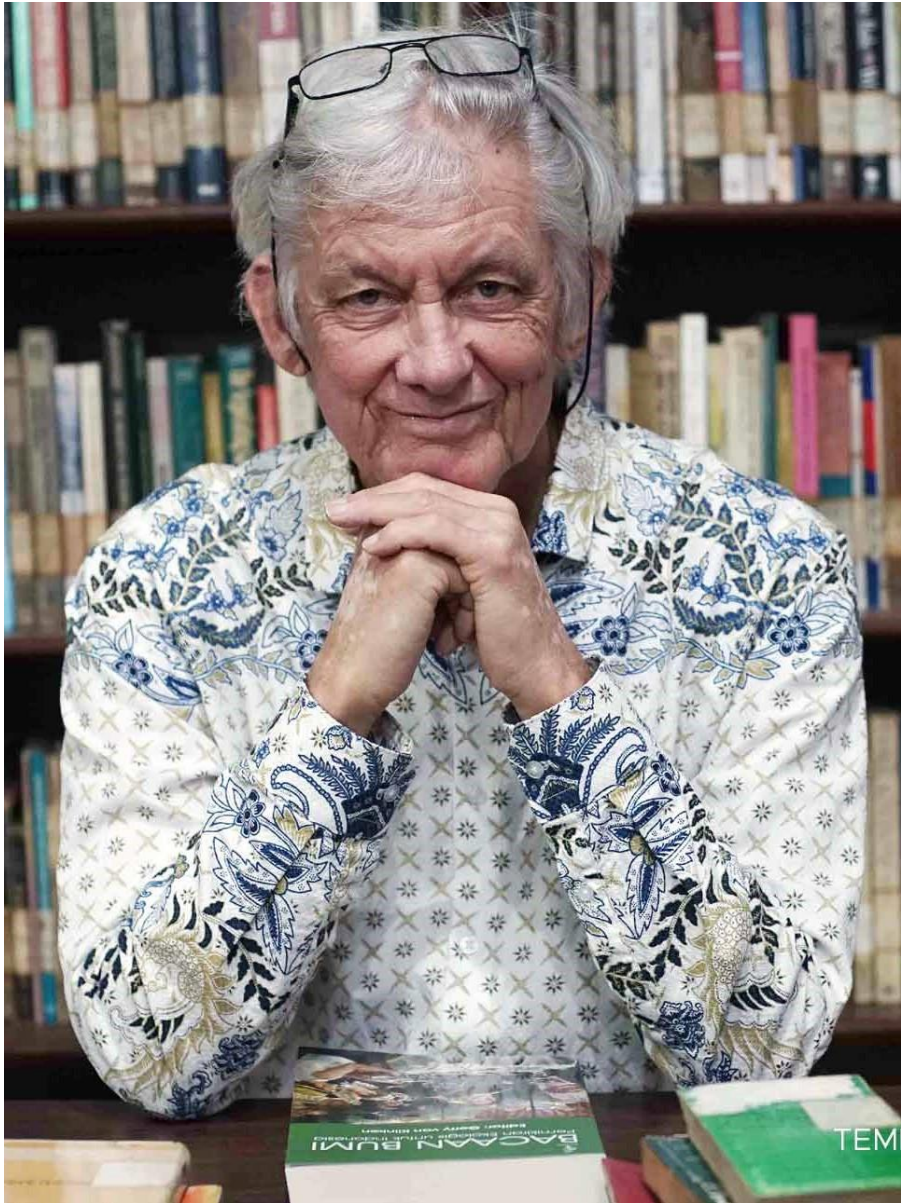


Cornell University

State of Authority



Cornell University



Gerry van Klinken and Joshua Barker, editors

State of Authority

The State in Society in Indonesia

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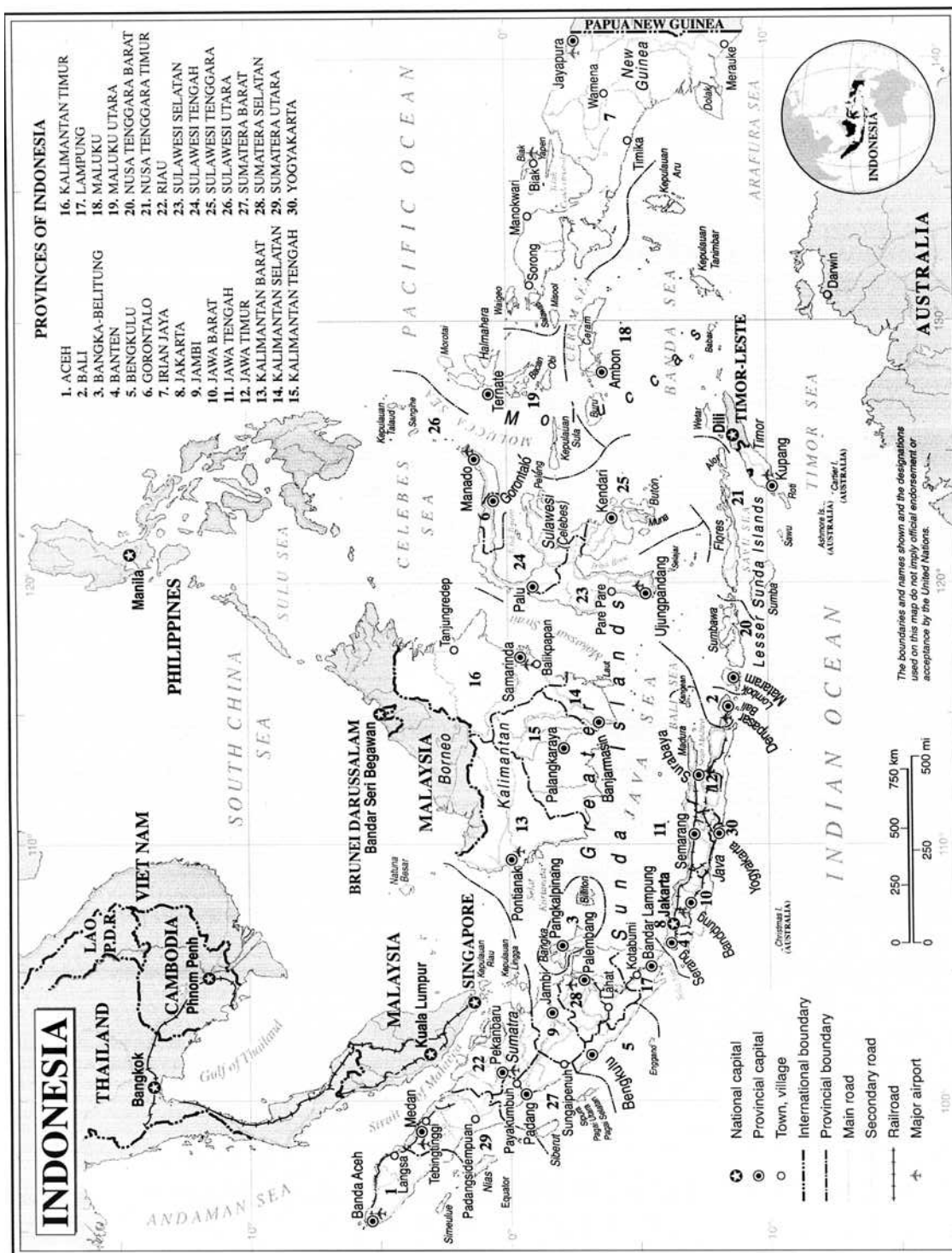
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PROVINCES OF INDONESIA

1. ACEH
2. BALI
3. BANGKA-BELITUNG
4. BANTEN
5. BENGKULU
6. GORONTALO
7. IRIAN JAYA
8. JAKARTA
9. JAMBI
10. JAWA BARAT
11. JAWA TENGAH
12. JAWA TIMUR
13. KALIMANTAN BARAT
14. KALIMANTAN SELATAN
15. KALIMANTAN TENGAH
16. KALIMANTAN TIMUR
17. LAMPUNG
18. MALUKU
19. MALUKU UTARA
20. NUSA TENGGAH BARAT
21. NUSA TENGGAH TIMUR
22. RIAU
23. SULAWESI SELATAN
24. SULAWESI TENGAH
25. SULAWESI TENGGARA
26. SULAWESI UTARA
27. SUMATERA BARAT
28. SUMATERA SELATAN
29. SUMATERA UTARA
30. YOGYAKARTA



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INTRODUCTION: STATE IN SOCIETY IN INDONESIA

Gerry van Klinken and Joshua Barker

It was not a question of a single Dutch sovereignty in the far-flung archipelago, but a "dust cloud of sovereignties" such as had hung above the German principalities, the Swiss cantons, and the Italian states before their consolidation ... Arching above this "dust cloud of sovereignties" in some parts of the archipelago was the thickening mist of Dutch suzerainty.¹

A major realignment is taking place in the way we understand the state in Indonesia. New studies on local politics, ethnicity, the democratic transition, corruption, Islam, popular culture, and other areas hint at novel concepts of the state, though often without fully articulating them. This book aims to capture some dimensions of this shift. One reason for the new thinking is a fresh wind in state studies more generally. People are posing new kinds of questions about the state, and they are developing new methodologies to answer them. Another reason for this shift is that Indonesia itself has changed, probably more than most people recognize. It looks more democratic, but also more chaotic and corrupt, than it did during the militaristic New Order of 1966–98. This book consists of case studies from many different settings around the archipelago. The studies focus on various types of state representatives, such as village heads, informal slum leaders, district heads, and parliamentarians. They explore the spaces and settings where the state is evident and where it is discussed: coffee houses, hotel lounges, fishing waters, and streetside stalls. They investigate state authority, both as a set of actual practices and as an image of what the state "ought" to be. The case studies, and the broader trend in scholarship of which they are a part, allow for a new theorization of the state in Indonesia that more adequately addresses the complexity of political life in this vast archipelago nation.

The book builds on a central argument that has helped direct the recent shift in state studies, which is that the autonomy of the state is more limited than it is often imagined to be. States may portray themselves as generic and immensely powerful in their own right, but in reality they are intimately embedded in their societies in

¹ G. J. Resink, *Indonesia's History between the Myths: Essays in Legal History and Historical Theory* (den Haag: van Hoeve, 1968), p. 335.

historically contingent ways. In this book, we begin with the assumption that the state–society divide needs to be broken down. It is a divide that has been drawn far more sharply in the past than is warranted by the facts. We then develop a critique of older methodologies for studying the state. Rather than focusing on static units such as rulers and closed institutions, we focus on processes of interaction and techniques of rule. Rather than assuming that the state is a single, homogeneous and coherent entity with a will of its own, we zoom in on the evident divisions and internal contradictions that make the state a site of struggle among many competing groups. And, finally, we draw new conclusions: we show that authority is not as centered, unified, and hegemonic as it has often been taken to be. Where there appears to be unity in the state, it is likely to be an ideological image promoted by the state itself. Such images can be powerful cultural constructs with great practical significance, so they should not be dismissed, but neither should they be allowed to blind observers to the reality of how state power is deployed and contested in myriad ways. In developing these insights, we are not claiming to reinvent state studies. On the contrary, we find continued relevance and even fresh importance in many elements of the existing literature. We discuss some of these elements in detail in our literature survey in the next chapter.

Our interest in building on insights from the new state studies literature is, in large part, a reaction to developments on the ground in Indonesia. These developments can be broadly characterized as processes of “democratization”² and “decentralization,”³ although they are far less orderly—and far less predictable—than these terms might suggest. The New Order was characterized by a powerful military, centralized decision-making, violent repression, and ideological control. Elections were largely ceremonial and served to return the same ruling party and much the same cast of characters to power year after year. The dramatic fall from grace of the military in 1998 marked the end of this regime. A decade later, the military shows no signs of regaining its former prestige. Furthermore, new groups have appeared on the political stage: an increasingly assertive middle class, indigenous groups, NGOs, militias, and Islamists, to name just a few. Political parties of all stripes have taken root, and there has been a quick succession of openly contested elections (including a new direct presidential election), yielding a new crop of national and sub-national leaders. The government relaxed its restrictions on the press and on public gatherings, which allowed open public debate to flourish. This opening up of the political process was not always smooth. As political temperatures

² Edward Aspinall, *Opposing Suharto: Compromise, Resistance, and Regime Change in Indonesia*, Contemporary Issues in Asia and the Pacific (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005); Arief Budiman, Barbara Hatley, and Damien Kingsbury, eds., *Reformasi: Crisis and Change in Indonesia* (Melbourne: Monash Asia Institute, 1999); Donald K. Emmerson, ed., *Indonesia Beyond Suharto: Polity, Economy, Society, Transition* (New York, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999); Damien Kingsbury and Arief Budiman, eds., *Indonesia: The Uncertain Transition* (Adelaide: Crawford House, 2001); R. William Liddle, ed., *Crafting Indonesian Democracy* (Bandung: Mizan, 2001); Chris Manning and Peter van Diermen, eds., *Indonesia in Transition: Social Aspects of Reformasi and Crisis* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000).

³ Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy, eds., *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003); Maribeth Erb, Carole Faucher, and Priyambudi Sulistiyanto, eds., *Regionalism in Post-Suharto Indonesia* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); Damien Kingsbury and Harry Aveling, eds., *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Minako Sakai, ed., *Beyond Jakarta: Regional Autonomy and Local Societies in Indonesia* (Adelaide: Crawford House, 2002).

rose, young men sometimes flocked to join ad hoc local militias aiming to protect their respective communities. "Money politics" is still important, and competition among parties and religious groups has sometimes turned violent. Nonetheless, the change has been remarkable. For the first time since measurements began in 1972, Freedom House classified Indonesia as "free" in its global survey of 2006.⁴ It had rated the country "not free" in the 1990s, upgrading it to "partly free" after 1998.

In concert with this rather fitful democratization, the Indonesian government has also undergone significant decentralization. Provinces and districts have won greater autonomy and more money to run their own affairs. In 2001, the government began implementing two somewhat sketchy 1999 laws on decentralization, one on finances and one on government structures. In 2004, a new law on decentralization (no. 32) elaborated and partly qualified the two earlier laws. As a consequence of these laws, regional parliaments have become new power centers, able to make and unmake key government executives. Much of the money has flowed under the table. New opportunities and unclear rules have caused corruption and ecological abuse to flourish. But popular protests against such crimes have also become louder. In some places such as Maluku, Central Sulawesi and parts of Kalimantan, the combination of democratic freedoms and rapid decentralization produced violent forms of communitarian competition, in which thousands died tragic deaths and hundreds of thousands were displaced. In other areas, the transition proceeded remarkably peacefully. One of the unexpected spin-offs of decentralization was the proliferation of new districts and provinces. Their proponents defended them as "bringing government closer to the people," but, once in power, these new bureaucratic chiefs misspent large amounts of money on constructing new office space in places that had little need for them.⁵ Gradually, decentralization appears to have become better regulated and more democratic. In 2005, as a result of popular disgust with "money politics" in provincial and district parliaments, Jakarta introduced direct elections for district chiefs and provincial governors (*pilkada*), similar to the presidential election. Hundreds of such elections passed off peacefully in that year and have continued to do so since. All these changes have dramatically affected the structure of state power. With only a little exaggeration, we can say that Indonesia's multiple local arenas have begun to resemble the late nineteenth century "dustcloud of sovereignties" of which Resink wrote.

Not just Indonesia has changed, but so have states everywhere. Globalization, which in the South tends to be viewed as an imperialistic project carried out by the rich and militarily mighty North,⁶ has been reshaping the things a national state can

⁴http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fiw09/CompHistData/FIW_AllScores_Countries.xls (accessed April 11, 2009).

⁵ Also new was a proliferation of reports by multilateral agencies mixing detailed statistics with plentiful advice on Indonesia's governance; see USAID-DRSP, "Stock Taking on Indonesia's Recent Decentralization Reforms," report (Jakarta: USAID Democratic Reform Support Program [DRSP], 2006); World Bank, "Spending for Development: Making the Most of Indonesia's New Opportunities—Indonesia Public Expenditure Review 2007," report, published by the World Bank, Jakarta, 2007.

⁶ Many scholars prefer the term "global South" to the term "Third World," which has Cold War associations, or the term "underdeveloped countries," which elevates industrialism as a progressive value. All three terms refer to the same large group of countries, located predominantly in the southern hemisphere, by contrast with the richer nations in the northern hemisphere.

and should do. In some areas, such as defining the national identity and providing welfare, the state is now generally expected to do less than in the past. The end of the Cold War in 1989 for a while meant that Western governments were more sensitive to their own domestic protests about human rights abuses committed by their former "frontline" allies. The "third wave" of democratization was sweeping across the developing world. The retired general Suharto fell in 1998 not only because of such reforms, but also because he was a Cold War warrior whose time had passed. But the idea that globalization has meant an across-the-board erosion of state powers is simplistic. After "9/11," the United States, which had been a proponent of reduced state interference in markets, put pressure on governments around the world to beef up their domestic anti-terror capabilities. Developing countries, for years urged to reduce their "bloated bureaucracies," are now being told they need an effective state in order to handle economic crises such as the one that struck Indonesia. The world's poorest countries, meanwhile, have become the subject of a policy literature on "state failure." According to the literature, these "premodern" states need to be strengthened to prevent them from immiserating their citizens and becoming sources of instability. This new approach is known as the post-Washington Consensus.

All these changes raise fundamental questions about the nature of the state. Most of us who contributed to this book have been writing about Indonesia for a long time. Like many intellectuals, we had grown attached to our stock phrases about the state, and we continued to use them even after they had outgrown their usefulness. As dynamic as the history of these ideas had been at times, by the end of the long New Order certain orthodoxies had spread through our academic idiom about the state and had then set solid, like a plaster cast. We routinely deployed terms like "bureaucratic polity," "bureaucratic authoritarianism," and "state corporatism," using them to portray an autonomous state that was able to assert its will over society with little fear of contradiction. The result, as Andrew MacIntyre pointed out in a survey of writings about the Indonesia state in 1990, was that: "... [a]ll the approaches are very heavily state-centred in their focus: very little scope is allowed for the possibility that extra-state actors have a major role ..."⁷

Scholarly perceptions of the state shifted radically after 1998. Before then, many had described the New Order state as strong and effective. Hal Hill's introduction to the 1994 overview volume he edited, for example, predicted that Indonesia's "effective and powerful civilian bureaucracy" would prove impervious to reform.⁸ After 1998, the key buzzwords of these models dropped silently from our vocabulary, for reasons not difficult to grasp, but few suggestions for alternative ways of talking about the state in Indonesia have emerged. Some observers at first saw shortfall everywhere, a perception echoed in expressions like "crisis," "disintegration," "fragmentation," "polycentrism," "chaos," "regime collapse," and "rampant corruption."⁹ The political fragmentation and contestation of the late 1990s

⁷ Andrew MacIntyre, *Business and Politics in Indonesia* (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991), p. 17.

⁸ Hal Hill, ed., *Indonesia's New Order: The Dynamics of Socio-Economic Transformation* (St. Leonard's: Allen & Unwin, 1994), p. xxix.

⁹ "Crisis" from the title of Budiman et al., *Reformasi: Crisis and Change in Indonesia*; "disintegration" from the title of Kingsbury and Aveling, *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*; "fragmentation" found in, for example, Budiman et al., *Reformasi: Crisis and Change in Indonesia*, p. 173, and in Manning and Van Diermen, *Indonesia in Transition*, p. 311; "polycentrism" in, for example, Emmerson, *Indonesia Beyond Suharto*, pp. 69, 234–35; "chaos"

and early 2000s could indeed be partly explained as belonging to a moment of paralysis typical of a regime transition. But we began to feel increasingly uncomfortable with such negative terms. States rarely pass from strength to failure overnight, and Indonesia had by no means experienced a social revolution. Probably the phenomena that struck observers after 1998 had been widespread but simply unremarked before then, reflecting something perennial about the way power works in Indonesia. Conversely, perhaps the state after 1998 was not as dysfunctional as often thought. But by choosing terms of negation such as “chaos,” these observers revealed more about the way they thought states *ought* to function than the way this one *did* function. A language of failure does not help us much to understand why things work the way they do.

This book will depart from the language of failure in an effort to rekindle a more balanced discussion about the Indonesian state.¹⁰ Our aim, as we move beyond the discussion of the failed state, is to open the alleged autonomy of state institutions to investigation. We pay close attention to the social forces traversing the state in its relations with society. Some processes are formal, such as political party formation, elections, anticorruption court cases, and the establishment of new district units resulting from decentralization. Others are far less so, such as the moral movements promoting *syariah* law at local levels. Our approach is to focus on the everyday, face-to-face exchanges between individuals, in the formal and informal settings where state power is exercised, discussed, and contested. We build on a growing body of empirical work on the micropolitics of everyday life. In the workshops that gave rise to the present book, we used a number of terms as we sought to grapple with what a new image of the state might be: the “embedded state,” the “state-in-society,” or perhaps the “network state.”¹¹ While each of these terms had its problems, all served to emphasize our commitment to studying the state in relation to the broader social context in which it is embedded.

from the title of Geoff Forrester, ed., *Post-Soeharto Indonesia: Renewal or Chaos?* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999); “collapse of the omnipotent central regime,” found in Aspinall and Fealy, *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia*, p. 256; and “rampant corruption” in Tim Lindsey, ed., *Law Reform in Developing and Transitional States* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 43.

¹⁰ The history of this conversation is too voluminous to examine here. Among the most important reviews or compendia are the following four. All focus on the national policy level; see Benedict R. O’G. Anderson and Audrey Kahin, eds., *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1982); MacIntyre, *Business and Politics in Indonesia*, Introduction; Mark T. Berger, “Old State and New Empire in Indonesia: Debating the Rise and Decline of Suharto’s New Order,” *Third World Quarterly* 18,2 (1997): 321–28; Simon Philpott, *Rethinking Indonesia: Postcolonial Theory, Authoritarianism, and Identity* (London: Macmillan, 2000). They are also restricted to foreign studies of the Indonesian state. A good study of Indonesian social science in general is the volume edited by Hadiz and Dhakidae, but it has no chapter explicitly on Indonesian analytical approaches to the state; see Vedi R. Hadiz and Daniel Dhakidae, eds., *Social Science and Power in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Equinox/Singapore: ISEAS, 2005).

¹¹ The term “embedded state” was attractive but sounded too much like Evans’s theoretically muddled “embedded state autonomy”; “state-in-society” is used by Migdal; the “network state” is a neologism inspired by Castells’s “network society”; see Peter B. Evans, “Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State,” *Sociological Forum* 4,4 (December 1989): 561–87; Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

This book consists of two introductory chapters and seven empirical case studies. In this chapter, we draw out some of the key themes that emerge from our empirical studies of the state. In the second chapter, we step back to provide a critical review of the two main “storylines” that have dominated analytical writing about the state in Indonesia. One of these narratives views it as a modern bureaucratic machine, the other as a personalized, culturally colored patrimonial affair. We argue that studies of the state in Indonesia would benefit from a recognition that the state is much lighter on the ground than it has often been assumed to be. They would also benefit from a research agenda inspired by new developments in the literature on state studies elsewhere in the world, which could help to better make sense of its institutional “patchiness.”

All seven empirical case studies that follow these two introductory chapters adopt an ethnographic approach to the state. They are microlevel studies often focused around specific individuals whose stories play out in concrete locales. The case studies provide a rare view of how Indonesian state authority is exerted and experienced on the ground in a wide range of settings. This does not yield a comprehensive view of the state in all its guises. Particularly, its formal institutional side—constitutional reforms, political party formation, relations between judiciary and executive, new roles for parliament, changes in taxation or welfare—is almost invisible here. That is to say, we observed it from below, as when, for example, Deasy Simandjuntak watched political party apparatchiks working a coffee shop in the morning. We felt a sense of excitement as we wrote. Deasy Simandjuntak wears her heart on her sleeve more than most in this regard. Her chapter conveys a palpable sense of surprise, even of revelation, at the disjuncture between what she had learned from her political science textbooks and what she saw in North Sumatra. Clientelism was supposed to be destructive of the political fabric, yet here it seemed to promise access to the new democracy. Civil society was supposed to be an essential element in democracy, but here a lot of consultation seemed to happen with little formal organization. We tried not to routinize this sense of revelation. It does give our work a tentative quality. Whether we have really discovered something novel about the state through our investigative mapping of networks, and whether we have successfully kept a scholarly distance from our ever-fascinating informants, we leave to the reader to judge.

That the state apparatus is institutionally fragmented is an underlying premise in most of this book. This proposition does not harmonize easily with some of the more sweeping ideas of state strength heard under the New Order. Rather than perceiving the state as a single subject capable of “action,” we see it as an institutional ensemble of power centers. The only state actors are specific sets of politicians and officials, in specific locations within the system. When we study their actions ethnographically, we see that they are often at loggerheads with each other. For example, Dorian Fougères writes in his chapter that, when Made Ali became head of a small fishing village on an island off South Sulawesi, he did not wholeheartedly implement his government’s laws on sustainable fishery because not all his constituents were served by rules against cyanide fishing. The governor of Bengkulu province in Sumatra, according to Syarif Hidayat and Gerry van Klinken, fought off attempts by the attorney-general’s department to prosecute him because he had issued a permit for an iron sands mine in a national park. The mine was creating employment and thus improving his chances of reelection. Tensions occur within discrete levels of the state but also between lower and higher levels. At certain moments in the political

cycle, provincial actors find ways to assert themselves against Jakarta. A new polycentrism is emerging that places many centers in dynamic tension with each other. Arenas of contest produce fragmentation of the state, while at the same time regimes of administration and governmentality continue to do their homogenizing work. This dialectic ought to be the subject of future research.

Each of a state's various institutions has its own interests, and each institution strategizes competitively in order to satisfy those interests. The focus for studies on the state, we believe, ought to be on relationships and strategies, not on static structures. A good example of institutional strategizing is found in John Olle's chapter on the state-sponsored Council of Indonesian Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI). Aiming to enhance its influence within the government, the council began to "create an issue" of heresy within society, focusing its allegations on the Ahmadiyah organization. By deliberately creating a moral panic about religious "deviants" and then adopting a censorious stance it knew few would comfortably oppose, it aimed to insert itself into the place long occupied by the larger, more mainstream religious organizations. In so doing, MUI was engaging other state institutions whose task it is to safeguard social cohesion (police, judiciary, even the president), and initiating this confrontation as part of a struggle for the ultimate rule-making authority.

The actors in these struggles for domination usually deploy certain well-established tactics or techniques of rule. Actual state practices are strategies for negotiating the competitive arena that we call the state. The arena is crisscrossed by complex social forces. State practices aim in different ways to enlarge alliances and exclude rivals by redrawing the boundaries of the legitimate state. The practices are partial and contingent in nature, as they necessarily take place amidst the diversity of institutional state and nonstate entities competing for dominance. Actors change their tactics as opportunities arise. In the 1980s, the MUI meekly acted like an advisor to the government on religious matters. But by 2005, it began allying with violent and intolerant religious organizations that had once been quite opposed to the secular developmentalism of the New Order government. Now MUI was aggressively claiming priority over other state institutions in religious matters, stating: "Because there is a *fatwa* from MUI, the government is automatically obliged to prohibit [Ahmadiyah]." ¹²

We observed many practices discussed in this book, sometimes incidentally and without further remarking on them. Most of the practices are best described as repertoires of action, that is, performative templates that can be repeated in different situations and that aim at a theatrical effect on their audience. "Regimist" thugs had often trashed the offices of dissident groups under the New Order. When various (formally unrelated) religious organizations began to use this tactic against the "heretical" Ahmadiyah, they did it not so much to injure Ahmadiyah members as to raise a panic about heresy among the wider population.

Some of the techniques observed are modern, such as the demonstrations students used to put pressure on the Jambi governor in December 2005, events examined in Syarif Hidayat and Gerry van Klinken's chapter. Others appear traditional, such as the violence among rival fishers groups that forced the village chief, himself a patron of one group, to adopt a mediating role, as described in

¹² See John Olle, "The Majelis Ulama Indonesia versus 'Heresy': The Resurgence of Authoritarian Islam," in this volume.

Dorian Fougères's piece. Others, again, look modern at first sight but on closer inspection turn out to resemble precolonial techniques. The church-building project adopted by a status-conscious elder statesman in Sumba, discussed in Jacqueline Vel's chapter, looks not unlike the tomb-building projects of the precolonial tribal chiefs.

It has become a commonplace to say that the boundary between state and society, particularly in countries of the global South, is "blurred."¹³ The contributions in this book aim to go further by claiming that the state exists *within* society. We have adopted Joel Migdal's phrase "state-in-society." Nicos Poulantzas, in a phrase that has been developed at length by Bob Jessop, wrote somewhat elliptically but even more provocatively that "the state is a social relation."¹⁴ He meant by this that we cannot understand the state without a good grasp of what we mean by "society." The social embeddedness of the state—a condition that the central argument of this book seeks to confirm—becomes particularly evident through the ethnographic method we adopted.¹⁵ A fascinating cast of state actors populates the chapters that follow, from the head of a quiet fishing village in South Sulawesi caught between the law and his village livelihood to a provincial governor in Jambi facing down protests over his building a controversial theme park. Their actions cannot be understood only through the optic that defines the state as a socially isolated institution of power.

Just as the state is fragmented, so society must not be essentialized as if it were a single entity. The contributions of Jacqueline Vel and Deasy Simandjuntak take particular care to distinguish social groups that have greater power from those that have less power over the lives of others not related to themselves. Each group has its own identity. But the social identities that cleave to these groups rarely emerge of their own accord. Often they are made through the same processes that also build and reproduce the state. According to Vel, the top 10 percent or so of Sumbanese society draws its status symbols—multiple houses, horse race trophies, numerous dependents—from precolonial myths. But its money comes almost entirely from the state budget, sent out from Jakarta. The education of its older members was provided in the first place by the church, which has still not shed its intimate association with the colonial state, dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its aristocratic honorifics date back no further than the compact the Dutch made with their ancestors under nineteenth-century indirect rule. Joshua Barker's chapter on governance in a Bandung slum is designed to show that, far from being a state-free zone in which a lumpen proletariat could at any moment decide to unleash a revolution, the slum has always been deeply penetrated by the state. It is true that the slum is what Derrida called a *voyoucracy*, "a corrupt and corrupting

¹³ Akhil Gupta, "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State," *American Ethnologist* 22, 2 (1995): 375–402.

¹⁴ Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*; Bob Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic Relational Approach* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), chap. 5.

¹⁵ In the terms of a famous debate within sociology, we have chosen a "social integration" approach, which investigates social order/disorder in terms of the social co-operation/conflict of agents. The other approach, "system integration," focuses not on actors but on "system parts." The two approaches are complementary, and either might be useful, depending on the research question. See Nicos Mouzelis, "Social and System Integration: Lockwood, Habermas, Giddens," *Sociology* 31,1 (1997): 111–19.

power of the street.”¹⁶ But the state never left it to its own devices. Since late colonial times, the state has bureaucratized the slum by means of technologies of healthcare and hygiene. More to the point here, the state has exercised its authority in the slum by cultivating the thuggish informal leaders that dominate its street life. We can say it practiced a form of indirect rule tantalizingly suggestive of that once practiced in Sumba.

In this book, the social embeddedness of the state mostly expresses itself in the neopatrimonial mode of relations. Unequal friendship—this is a less exotic way to describe the patron–client relationship than metaphors based on ancient kingdoms—features in most chapters in this book. The influence of a retired district chief in Sumba depends on his being a patron to many others. Reputation is as important as formal office. Here the neopatrimonial relation is no longer an abstraction, as in some earlier texts on the Indonesian state, but is explored biographically. It is the one concrete reality upon which the state sits like an elaborate myth. Life histories reveal the intricacy of carefully wrought relational networks. How has this history shaped a person’s trustworthiness, interests, and competencies? How skilled are they at the mediating work that is the state’s *raison d’être*? We can see in John Olle’s chapter how the reputation for obsessive heresy-hunting that “Pak A” built up over many years suddenly struck the conservative MUI organizers as useful in their post-New Order push for influence. Dorian Fougères’s close reading of a village chief’s life illustrates how the biographical and the institutional are inextricably intertwined.

The importance of unequal friendship to Indonesian state power raises a theoretical question that has long been central to studies of this postcolonial state (see Chapter Two). How does the universal model of neopatrimonialism we have inherited from the neo-Weberian literature help us to understand the particular forms state power takes in different locales? For example, how does the peculiarly egalitarian form of gift-giving common in Eastern Indonesia make the patron–client pattern there different from that of Java? A study of neopatrimonialism also raises the question of origins. To what extent are reputations created through the modern state, and thus properly called *neopatrimonial*, or, conversely, created through social circuits beyond the state that perhaps have a much longer history (which might make the original label, “patrimonial,” more relevant)? Does the retired Sumbanese district chief draw his authority primarily from his family roots in a precolonial aristocracy, or, conversely, from the networking skills that are the legacy of a successful career in Golkar and the bureaucracy? Our suspicion, like John Pemberton’s, is that modern state projects, such as depoliticized developmentalism, have been highly productive of societal effects, such as respect for aristocratic lineages.¹⁷

Despite its fragmentation and institutional patchiness, therefore, the state retains its preeminence as a field for achieving and holding onto power. The relationships binding various social elements together in bonds of solidarity, rivalry, or oppression always traverse the state and often originate in bureaucratic institutions. Even money does not appear to have an independent force. Independently wealthy business entrepreneurs only put in cameo appearances in this book—in hindsight, we perhaps should have paid them more attention—but the examples we do have

¹⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 66.

¹⁷ John Pemberton, *On the Subject of “Java”* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

never suggest that money alone can produce power over others. There is no purely societal "class power" that is not at the same time also "state power." Some characters in this book are wealthy, like former district chief Umbu Djima in Sumba, or the businessman-turned-district chief Zulkifli Nurdin of Jambi, but they look to the state to gain upward mobility and prestige. The state may also provide them with the capacity to enforce rules that favor their accumulation strategies. In Sumba, as in many other provincial areas, particularly outside Java, most of the money in circulation comes from the state budget. Decisions over who gets what are made within what Vel calls the "political class." This loosely defined group includes many disparate networks that each clusters around a politically influential personality. Besides the high-level executives currently in office, the political class "also embraces others capable of influencing the allocation of state resources: (some) retired state officials, businessmen, political party bosses, clan leaders, religious leaders and the wives and mothers of all these influential men," according to Vel.

Our studies suggest that this interlinking of class and state power holds not only for big corporate players, the so-called *konglomerat* based in Jakarta and Singapore, as has long been highlighted by Richard Robison, but also for much smaller players in the provinces. The loose political alliances that have been busily deploying strategies are today also forming dynamic centers in the provinces and districts, in ways not seen for a long time. Urban bureaucrats, business entrepreneurs, and NGO activists sometimes resemble a social class that cultivates networks, seizes available rents, excludes or patronizes the poor, and deploys authoritarian ideologies.

Just as there is no class power without state power, so there are no notable countervailing forces outside the state. Although we did not aim at consensus on this point, the contributors to this book tend not to consider existing civil society in Indonesia as essentially opposed to the state. We thus take issue with what has been called the "counterweight" view of civil society, which was the dominant one in the democratization discourse in Indonesia in the late New Order years.¹⁸ The ease with which popular anger against Suharto's military in 1998 was reduced to an issue of Suharto's personal corruption and then left to linger in the courts, for example, suggests little fundamental disagreement between civil society and the state. Eva-Lotta Hedman has invoked Antonio Gramsci to make a similarly iconoclastic argument for the Philippines.¹⁹ If we define the state broadly as Gramsci did (political society + civil society = the integral state),²⁰ then people within civil society are also part of the state. We cannot understand the operation of the state by referring only to officials. The social bases in which the state is embedded are quite wide. Like Jacqueline Vel, John Olle explores social bases of state power that extend beyond officialdom into religion. "Pak A," a small man with a goatee who has been obsessively writing incoherent pamphlets about heretics for decades with little effect, now sits on the central board of MUI, along with men whose entire careers have been in Golkar and the religious bureaucracy. Joshua Barker describes people even further

¹⁸ Arief Budiman, ed., *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, No. 22 (Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990).

¹⁹ Eva-Lotta E. Hedman, *In the Name of Civil Society: From Free Election Movements to People Power in the Philippines* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).

²⁰ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci: Edited and Translated by Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith* (New York, NY: International Publishers, 1971), Notebook 6, §88, pp. 262–63.

down the social ladder who support state power in the slum. Eman Suherman is a street vendor with such good organizational skills that he attracted the eye first of the police, who wanted his help to prevent a riot from breaking out in 1998, and then of the political party PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), whose representatives wanted him to mobilize lower-class voters in the slum.

Not everyone belongs. Networks also exclude. The state as a network is not embedded in all places and social formations. We occasionally catch glimpses in our chapters of a state that looks, after all, like an alien, predatory creature. Once the election in Bengkulu and Jambi is over, the real work involves small factional cliques with shallow social roots. The great majority of Sumba's population, the rural poor, have no leverage over the hiring-and-firing decisions that keep the political class's rice bowls full. The "common person" in Deasy Simandjuntak's chapter lives in a world where state actors visit so rarely that it is a wonder to him or her when leaders do show up to try to win precious votes.

The composition of the political class—or what could be called the local establishment—varies over time, but in general it changes only slowly. Umbu Djima, the church-building former district chief, built up his social capital in Sumba over a successful bureaucratic career that spanned decades. In his retirement, his capital only seems to be growing. Loren Rytter shows that of the national parliamentarians serving between 2004 and 2009 and belonging to the largest party, Golkar, at least 41 percent had been socialized through membership in a corporatist, and sometimes violent, pro-New Order youth organization, most frequently KNPI (Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia, The Indonesian National Youth Committee). There they learned the tough business of political manipulation, of scrambling for turf and positions, and of running protection rackets and skimming funds off the state budget. Nevertheless, the proportion of national parliamentarians overall with such a background is declining, and members constituting the largest group in parliament now say their background is business. Democratization has, above all, politicized businesspeople, as it has done in many Asian countries.²¹ Even at the downmarket end of town, Joshua Barker noticed slow change in the social basis of support for the state. The tough guys who dominated the *kampung* between the 1970s and the 1990s, whom military intelligence recruited for surveillance work, have been replaced by a new generation of more entrepreneurial, political types, who are of interest to the political parties.

Those who have made it to the privileged strata never find it easy to stay on top. State power is a complex, contradictory effect of class and popular democratic struggles, mediated through an array of institutions. The balance of social forces is constantly changing. Neopatrimonial networks do not determine who is a member of the local establishment. There are usually more available patrons than is necessary to keep the system going. Brastagi's coffee-shop scene shows real competition among rival patrons. Brokers play vital roles in mobilizing constituencies, and they do not appeal only to myths of primordial groups. Much of local politics is highly pragmatic. Bus drivers in Brastagi's coffee shop listened carefully for indications that this or that candidate would favor or oppose relocation of the bus terminal. Other customers eating their greasy noodles heard that the incumbent district chief had

²¹ Edmund Terence Gomez, ed., *Political Business in East Asia, Politics in Asia* (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 2002).

little support left beyond thuggish debt collectors who intimidated market stall-owners. They later voted him out, in favor of a smoothly spoken military man who had been district chief before and who promised to bring order, discipline, and cleanliness. The newly elected governors of Jambi and Bengkulu both ran into opposition for awarding business projects to cronies who had assisted their election campaigns. Downward social mobility (*jatuh kelas*) is a constant risk. The backdrop for all these contingent local struggles is the logic of capital accumulation and the ongoing risk of economic crises. Although the possibility seemed remote when we wrote these contributions, as we went to press another crisis like that of 1998, induced by an American banking catastrophe far beyond any provincial player's control, was appearing on the horizon. Such a crisis could conceivably trigger fresh protests that could break up the alliances underpinning the establishment.

Illegal practices are part of the exercise of power. Although private greed is a crucial motive, and law enforcement is weak, such practices are neither merely private clandestine activities nor harbingers of a "soft" or "failed" state. It is true that inadequate personnel and budgets (as highlighted in the next chapter) make it less likely that the state's disciplinary powers will be invoked. But the terms "softness" and "failure" suggest that the only thing stopping an effective state is lack of resources. In fact, the system is kept permanently incapacitated because so many people profit from its incapacity. Illegal activities bind state officials to each other and to nonstate actors. They extend the struggle for domination into the marketplace, and they bind state actors to elements in society.²² Systematic underfunding of the bureaucracy, minimal oversight, and competition among state institutions lead state agents to build coalitions with nonstate actors. Money is the main medium of exchange. For example, the new governors of Jambi and Bengkulu could not have won their election campaigns without clandestine payments from friends in the business community. Despite the political controversy that inevitably ensued, they had to reward these donors with fresh projects after their election.

Money alone is not enough to sustain loyal relationships that are at constant risk of legal sanctions. Trust develops from more emotive bonds, such as a reputation for neighborliness, honesty, or piety. Blood relatives, co-regionists, co-religionists, or co-ethnics make more reliable partners than strangers because they are already part of a dense network of mutual personal obligations. Agreements are more easily enforced, since no one wants to be penalized for noncompliance by alienation from their "natural" group. The patronage that flows along neopatrimonial networks is usually informal, if not illegal, in nature. The book of donations for Uumbu Djima's large church in rural Sumba reveals how the circulation of cash with dubious origins helps cement power relationships among the island's political class. Thus the chairman of a church foundation, instead of using the economic development fund he controlled to buy goats for poor farmers, as he should have been doing, made a large donation to the church-building fund because he felt that improving his relationship with Uumbu Djima was more important to him than the gratitude of the poor. The informal *kampung* leader Nana Berlit, in the Bandung slum Cicadas in the 1970s, made some money for himself and his military and police bosses through the Rahwana youth

²² The term "shadow state" first achieved prominence in a study of Sierra Leone. It described a complex struggle for market domination and political authority that takes place via the interpenetration of formal state institutions and societal networks; see William Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

organization. Besides hosting martial arts activities, the organization provided “protection” to local shops and factories. It was, moreover, an important conduit for local political surveillance.

When the law is paralyzed, the technique of last resort for enforcing contracts—as well as for outright extortion—is violence. In this respect, illegality and violence go hand in hand. Threats are the stuff of politics in Indonesia. Loren Rytter quotes a Medan parliamentarian who shrugs off hostile demonstrators by saying:

People threaten us, we can handle it. Because we’re used to brawling in the field. Normally people we deal with [are] like that, demonstrators who pound the tables, pound the doors. We just sit back calmly [*slow aje*] and watch, ha ha ha, right? Because we’re used to it. We’re used to being chased with swords. “Is that all you got?!”

The threat of legal action is even more common. As the business crony of the Jambi governor said when confronted with the possibility of losing his reward due to popular protests: “I not only possess the MoU, but also many other letters and strong proofs.” However, violent threats and even the threat of legal action are rarely carried out. Protection money, circulating through neopatrimonial networks and reinforcing trust, is an alternative way of coping with insecurity.

Discourse is also an important means to shore up (or challenge) authority. The discourses described in this book are deployed as part of various hegemonic projects, in which ideas and material interests interpenetrate. They are not produced equally throughout society but primarily by individuals who occupy key nodes in the network state. Their originators already enjoy economic, cultural, and/or social capital.²³ Politically efficacious cultural capital often employs religious symbols and hierarchies. Jacqueline Vel’s chapter demonstrates how patrimonial networks involving state actors are constructed in a religious domain. The church is outside the state—maybe not that far outside it in colonial times—yet it remains an important network anchor. Sumba is largely Christian, whereas most of the rest of Indonesia is Islamic. John Olle’s chapter describes the strategic deployment of an Islamic discourse against “heresy” by figures on the margins of the establishment who attempt to improve their position.

The major discourses recurring throughout the book are those that create idealized images of what the state is and how it is meant to function. Electoral candidates in Brastagi promised to bring order, discipline, and cleanliness to the district, all without bribes. Police officers confronting cyanide fishers on Pulau Rantau off South Sulawesi invoked the state’s authority to preserve the marine environment from destructive practices for future generations. Discourse, understood broadly so as to include the kinds of performance whose aura does not necessarily depend on words, is essential in the struggle for domination because brute force alone is never sufficient. Discourses that provide a “state idea” can be very powerful when they resonate with and reproduce popular symbols and styles concerning order and disorder, hierarchy, and harmony. They are even more powerful when they draw upon and intersect with discourses found in revered indigenous texts. Most Brastagi candidates mixed discourses of modern good

²³ Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1986), pp. 241–58.

governance with those invoking the locally dominant symbol of the “*raja*,” a person of wealth and influence, someone who embodies both a biblical righteousness and a familiarity with Batak *adat*.

In our case studies, we also see various instances where challenger elites use a discourse of wronged identities to mobilize crowds against incumbents. John Olle describes the ideological strategy conservative religious groups deploy to try to move public debate their way. They create a moral panic about religious “heresy” and then invite or pressure mainstream religious figures to join them in their outrage. Hypocrisy is rife. Discourses of sovereignty, national identity, religious morality, the rule of law, good governance, and even budgets are designed to create precisely calculated theatrical effects among voters, multilateral funding agencies, and domestic opponents. Contradictory discourses are deployed for different audiences. One of the Brastagi candidates, a deacon in the church, also kept a hotel-cum-brothel, where he was obliged to welcome and give gifts to his poor rural relatives who had come to support him. His discourse of family solidarity in their presence contradicted both the righteousness and the impartiality of his public campaign discourse. Discourses play out in a context of extra-discursive constraints. Anticorruption discourses are often deployed unfairly to bring down rivals. The antiheresy discourse outlined in John Olle’s chapter only emerged once the military-dominated New Order had crumbled.

The state discourses reported in this book are embedded in culture. We can view them as the product of multiple and fragmented “metropolitan supercultures.” However, contra Harry Benda and Clifford Geertz,²⁴ who thought the independent state would conform to and arise out of an original indigenous culture, these state discourses do not indigenize the state. Instead, they bring the existing modern state close to the people, familiarizing them with it in numerous ways. When bus drivers “overhear” state officials talking in a coffee shop in Sumatra, or when small-scale vendors discuss the municipal budget while holding court in a streetside stall in Bandung, or when posters of the president are on sale on the sidewalk next to posters of Red Hot Chili Peppers or the Pope, the state has become amazingly intimate, even as it maintains an aura of remoteness.

State power is also spatial. State institutions have their own spatial scales, and our studies reveal how much place matters. The “state image,” projected by state actors, is indeed homogeneous. In it, the state’s sovereignty extends uniformly across the entire territory, stopping abruptly at the international borders. But as we see in the next chapter, where we analyze the footprint of the state in some statistical detail, actual state presence is patchy. It is intense in provincial towns, with their numerous government offices and little else besides. In other places—urban slums, rural backwaters—there are hardly any formal state personnel. Instead, various non- and semi-state actors claim to be authorized by the state. The informal leaders in the Bandung slum, the antiheretical pamphleteer “Pak A” in his narrow East Jakarta shop front, and the fisherman-cum-village head “Made Ali” on Pulau Rantau, are good examples in this book. Networks of unequal personal relationships connect these sites of state power. They can stretch over large social and geographic distances. Being unequal, the relationships are directional. They tend to spread

²⁴ Harry J. Benda, “Democracy in Indonesia,” in *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate*, pp. 13–29; Clifford Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).

outward from the center, rather than inward from villages to the center. They bunch up in the towns. The networks are by no means flat, but neither do they map completely onto the formal hierarchies of a particular legal-rational state apparatus. Local state practices are colored by local discourses, personalities, and places.

Specific spaces assume a particular significance in this disaggregated Indonesia. Examples include the coffee shop where Deasy Simandjuntak observed lobbyists for parliamentary candidates meeting their public in North Sumatra, the hotel foyer where Loren Ryter heard parliamentarians hold forth on how power works in Indonesia, and the wooden home of the chief of a fishing village in South Sulawesi where Dorian Fougères had nocturnal conversations with his host. It is difficult to imagine the deals made in these places being made in any other kinds of space. Maybe Joshua Barker's Bandung can *only* be Bandung and does not represent a typical metropolis in Indonesia. There is a situated sense of political geography in these chapters that has been missing from much previous work on the state in Indonesia.

Like place, time is an often-neglected variable in studies of the state. How the state is imaged and how it is embedded in society varies over time. The typical state client in the Bandung slum in the 1970s was a street fighter, but by the 2000s he had become more bureaucratic and more politically sophisticated. Time is a dimension we have only begun to explore in this book. We hope others will feel inspired by the idea of reinserting the study of the state into that of society and will carry out the historical work on this subject that it so urgently needs.

In short, state studies in Indonesia are in a phase of exciting progress. The studies in this volume have benefited greatly from new trends in state studies, and we hope that they can in turn contribute to studies on states in general and to studies of states of the global South in particular.

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²⁵ Previous projects in this program have resulted in volumes on local politics, on communal conflict, and on new forms of historiography. See Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken, eds., *Renegotiating Boundaries: Local Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV, 2007); Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, Routledge Contemporary Southeast Asia Series, no. 15 (London: Routledge, 2007); and Henk Schulte Nordholt, Bambang Purwanto, and Ratna Saptari, eds., *Perspektif Baru Penulisan Sejarah Indonesia* (Jakarta: Obor/KITLV/Pustaka Larasan, 2008). The KITLV Research Program is described in http://www.kitlv.nl/home/Research?subpage_id=179 (as of May 2009).

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REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE IN INDONESIA

Joshua Barker and Gerry van Klinken

It is difficult to imagine what the study of Indonesia would be like if it had not included debates about the state. Contributors to these debates have included some of Indonesian studies' best-known figures, who have provided nuanced arguments about how best to understand each successive change in the political regime. One of our central questions, as we reread their work, was whether these previous understandings were perhaps not so much descriptions of the existing state but rather images of an idealized state, ideological statements whose origins lie with the state itself. The history of the concept "state" is itself inescapably ideological, so the possibility seemed all too real that an academic wishing to generalize about something as vast as the Indonesian state may have unintentionally adopted a projected image from elsewhere. Of course, kernels of empirical truth can sustain the longevity of these images of the state. Nonetheless, we felt that now such images were in genuine need of interrogation.

We do not intend to provide a full account of how debates about the Indonesian state have evolved over time. We have chosen instead to focus on providing a big picture of some of the main developments in how the Indonesian state has been analyzed and understood. This big picture serves as the backdrop for the approaches to studying the state found in the papers included in this volume. In what follows, we sketch out two main storylines—one about the modern state, the other about the traditional precolonial state—that emerge from several decades of discussions about the Indonesian state. These storylines cannot always be tied exclusively to a particular author or to a group of authors, as scholars often contributed elements to both storylines at various times in their careers. We call our abstractions "storylines" rather than "images" in part because we want to emphasize that they are not static—they are always changing. Also, we want to draw attention to the fact that claims about Indonesian state power have been made overwhelmingly through claims about historical origins and continuities. The two storylines we will examine are, first, the story about the origins and development of the modern state and, second, the story of the legacy and development of the traditional or precolonial state. There are other storylines, particularly focused on political economy and political

pluralism, and we shall mention them in less detail below, but they have not occupied the central position of these two.

Both our main storylines highlight the role of political and economic elites. A focus on elites has struck most observers as essential to our understanding of the state in Indonesia.¹ Evidently, Indonesia's political economy and culture are not integrated but deeply divided between an elite and the rest of society. The elite has always held onto the state, and as the elite has changed over time, so too has the complexion of the state and its mode of authority. How does such a small group of people exert such a sustained influence far beyond their numbers without being swept away by the disenfranchised majority? The interest in the problem of integration, or the segregation of an elite from the majority, can be traced back to two scholars of late-colonial economy, society, and government administration, J. H. Boeke and J. S. Furnivall. Writing about the economy, Boeke famously described the late-colonial Indies in terms of a radical division between two sectors: a largely European sector, which was modernizing and industrializing, following the kind of capitalistic development that had been seen in Europe; and a non-Western sector, which was still overwhelmingly agricultural and precapitalist.² Furnivall developed this line of analysis further by showing that the dual structure of the colonial economy was reflected in what he termed a "plural society." In this society, ethnic groups "mixed but did not blend."³ The sharpest boundaries were drawn between natives, Chinese, and Europeans, and these lines were reflected in the colonial administration. Whereas the European component of society was governed by European law and by Europeans, the non-Western sector was administered according to a blend of modern law and customary law (*adat*), often through indirect rule. Furnivall explained the persistence of pluralism into the late-colonial period in economic terms: since Dutch colonialism had been, until the late-nineteenth century at least, oriented primarily toward simple extraction rather than toward creating a market for European goods, colonial administration had remained largely plural in structure. (Other scholars have now documented the important role played by colonial policy and colonial discourses in enabling and maintaining this dualism.⁴)

¹ Western theoreticians of the state in general distinguish three broad ideological positions: pluralism, elitism, and Marxism. Pluralist analyses recognize no center of power in the state; in elitist ones, all power is concentrated in a small number of hands; while in Marxist analyses, power is shown to serve class ends. Colin Hay, Michael Lister, and David Marsh, eds., *The State: Theories and Issues* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Our use of the term "elite" refers to a small group of power holders that enjoys a major share of authority. As will become apparent below, this elite has been characterized variously in cultural, sociological, and political economic terms (sometimes with strong class overtones).

² J. H. Boeke, *Indonesian Economics: The Concept of Dualism in Theory and Policy* (The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1966).

³ J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and the Netherlands India* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1956), pp. 278–79.

⁴ On race and gender, see for example Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1995). On Indo-Europeans, see Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). A recent Dutch study of dualism in colonial policing is Marieke Bloembergen, "The Dirty Work of Empire: Modern Policing and Public Order in the Netherlands-Indies, 1897–1942," *Indonesia* 83 (April 2007): 119–50. On policies toward the Chinese, see Takashi Shiraishi, "Anti-Sinicism in Java's New Order," in *Essential Outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe*, ed. Daniel Chirot and Anthony Reid

The dualism of Indonesian society in the early post-World War II period has often been described in terms of the gap between a “metropolitan enclave,” consisting of an economic and political class residing primarily in urban areas, and the broader mass of Indonesians living under traditional forms of village leadership in the provinces.⁵ Hildred Geertz used the term “metropolitan superculture” to typify the political ideology, artistic styles, and material culture of the urban elite.⁶ It is important to note in this context that the Indonesian state was extremely light on the ground in the postwar period. In fact, the total state budget in the early 1950s was not much larger than Cornell University’s in the same period.⁷ The political class that dominated the fledgling state and other political institutions was drawn primarily from a small class of Dutch-educated journalists, political activists, and bureaucrats. Although ethnically, religiously, and ideologically diverse, most members of the elite were united in their opposition to colonial rule and in their embrace of a self-consciously modern, metropolitan superculture rooted in the national *lingua franca*. Most ordinary Indonesians, in contrast, had been schooled only in their local languages, if at all, and had been kept at a distance from the modern institutions of government and business. The bureaucratization of government in the late-colonial period had closed off the few opportunities there had been for a less Westernized indigenous elite to develop. This meant that the gap between the state—which was dominated by the elite—and the people was very wide: the colonial legacy of dualism continued into the postcolonial period, despite the end of Dutch rule.

THE MODERN STATE: FROM BUREAUCRATIC STATE TO POLICE STATE

A core focus of discussion within state studies about both Sukarno’s and Suharto’s periods of rule centered on the question of whether to understand the postcolonial state as being a continuation of a late-colonial bureaucratic state, albeit now in the hands of an Indonesian elite, or whether it ought to be understood, to some extent at least, as an indigenous type of state that functioned along traditional or patrimonial lines. Was the postcolonial state the result of the extension of a modern bureaucracy from centers of government out into villages, or was it the result of an extension of traditional forms of leadership and rule from villages and towns into state institutions?

The story of the rationalization of state power and the rise of the modern bureaucratic state is a common one for scholars working in a Weberian tradition. Whether explicitly or implicitly, most post-World War II scholars of Indonesian

(Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 187–207. On *adat* law, see Peter J. Burns, *The Leiden Legacy: Concepts of Law in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pradnya Paramita, 1999); and Jamie S. Davidson and David Henley, eds., *The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics: The Deployment of Adat from Colonialism to Indigenism* (London: Routledge, 2007). See also a volume on laws about dress: Henk Schulte Nordholt, ed., *Outward Appearances: Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997).

⁵ For example, Ruth T. McVey, “The Beamtenstaat in Indonesia,” in *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate*, ed. Benedict R. O’G. Anderson and Audrey Kahin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1982), pp. 84–91.

⁶ Hildred Geertz, “Indonesian Cultures and Communities,” in *Indonesia*, ed. Ruth T. McVey (New Haven, CT: Human Relations Area Files, 1963), pp. 24–96.

⁷ Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, personal communication.

politics have approached the state with at least one eye on the problem of what Weber termed the “rationalization” of political authority.⁸ The view that the Indonesian state was already fundamentally a bureaucratic state was notably put forward in a short article in 1966 by Harry Benda, who argued that the Indonesians had inherited a colonial state that, in its last decades, had undergone significant reforms aimed at bureaucratic rationalization.⁹ These reforms had given rise to what was referred to in Dutch as a *beambtenstaat*: an apolitical, administrative state that functioned more or less as a bureaucratic machine. Heather Sutherland later buttressed this argument by showing in detail how in Java during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries administrative reforms had progressively transformed what had been a hereditary Javanese elite, the *priyayi*, into a Dutch-educated indigenous bureaucratic elite with more tenuous ties to their places of origin, fairly high levels of functional specialization, and career paths that took them through a series of salaried offices.¹⁰ Thus, in certain important respects, the transformations the colonial state had undergone could be understood to be following a classic Weberian process of rationalization.

Interest in the bureaucratic qualities of the state enjoyed a renaissance after the publication of Sutherland’s work, in part because it helped explain the importance of bureaucratic authority in Suharto’s New Order regime. Noting the parallels, McVey and Anderson argued that Suharto’s New Order state could be understood to represent a reemergence of the *beambtenstaat* in the post-colonial period.¹¹ The New Order state enjoyed pretty much the same territorial boundaries as the colonial state, it had similar administrative structures, it demobilized mass political organizations, it claimed to promote “efficiency” and “rule of law,” and it was presided over by an elite that often seemed suspended above the society it ruled over. There were also

⁸ The Western discourse about the state—of which this book is a part—has a rich history going back through Weber, Locke, Hobbes, Hegel, and Machiavelli, to Plato and Aristotle. Early definitions of the state tended to be juridical, emphasizing its legal sovereignty and international recognition. Weber’s innovation was to look to the functional. The state’s *de facto* capacities, especially in the areas of granting legitimacy and controlling the means of violence, are foremost in his definition of the state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1967 [original 1946]), p. 78. In fact, the modern state differs from its premodern predecessor in both juridical and functional ways. Juridically, it has a more distinct border, which encloses a territory in which only one state exists. Functionally, it wields more wide-ranging institutional capacities, including those concerned with taxation, welfare, security, and justice. All states in the world today claim to be modern when they join the United Nations. Weber saw organization aimed at domination as the central characteristic of the ideal modern state: “[T]he modern state is a compulsory association which organizes domination ... [it is] a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate (i.e., considered to be legitimate) violence.” Gerth and Mills, eds., *From Max Weber*, p. 78. The notion of the autonomous bureaucratic state, which was so influential in descriptions of the New Order state, took Weber’s emphasis on the power of organization to an extreme while dropping Weber’s interest in legitimation.

⁹ Harry J. Benda, “The Pattern of Administrative Reforms in the Closing Years of Dutch Rule in Indonesia,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 25,4 (1966): 589–605.

¹⁰ Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese Priyayi* (Singapore: Heinemann, 1979).

¹¹ McVey, “The Beamtenstaat in Indonesia”; Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, “Old State, New Society: Indonesia’s New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 42,3 (May 1983): 477–96.

important differences between the two. During the colonial period, the state had served the interests of a business elite, whereas during the New Order of the 1970s and early 1980s, the bureaucratic elite primarily served its own interests. Also, as Anderson emphasized, the colonial state was paired with a different kind of society.¹² Nationalism had given rise to alternate centers of authority and new kinds of politics that had their own dynamics and interests, quite distinct from the dynamics and interests of the officials and institutions comprising the state qua state.

Characterizing the Indonesian state as a bureaucratic machine that stands above and rules over society has been an ongoing theme in studies of the Indonesian state. Sometimes this idea has been taken to an extreme, as when Indonesia has been characterized as a "bureaucratic polity," a political system in which all meaningful political decisions are made within the bureaucracy, which includes the armed forces, the civil administration, and the police, but not political parties, parliament, charismatic leaders, or mass organizations.¹³ Karl Jackson wrote of them: "Like islands cut off from the social seas surrounding them, bureaucratic polities are largely impervious to the currents in their own societies and may be more responsive to external pressures emanating from the international arena."¹⁴

In this kind of polity, the relation between state and society is perhaps best understood as a problem of policing. It is therefore not surprising that a number of studies that focused on the bureaucratic aspects of New Order rule highlighted the ways in which its bureaucratic machine—inherited from the colonial state—functioned as an instrument to police society and, in some cases, violently eliminate its opponents.¹⁵ The shift from viewing the bureaucratic state as an apolitical machine to seeing it as a police state with power built into the bureaucratic machinery was due in part to Foucault's influence on Indonesian studies. Rudolf Mrázek and Takashi Shiraishi, for example, both described the late-colonial police state in terms that owed a great deal to Foucault's discussion of the panopticon.¹⁶ The intensive and widespread focus on the policing function of the bureaucratic

¹² Anderson, "Old State, New Society."

¹³ Karl D. Jackson, "Bureaucratic Polity: A Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Power and Communications in Indonesia," in *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, ed. Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 3–42; John L. S. Girling, "The Bureaucratic Polity in Modernizing Societies: Similarities, Differences, and Prospects in the ASEAN Region," in *Occasional Paper*, No. 64 (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1981), p. 1.

¹⁴ Jackson, "Bureaucratic Polity."

¹⁵ Takashi Shiraishi, "The Phantom World of Digoel," *Indonesia* 61 (April 1996): 93–118; Hans Antlöv, *Exemplary Centre, Administrative Periphery: Rural Leadership and the New Order in Java*, Monograph Series, no. 68 (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995); Joshua Barker, "State of Fear: Controlling the Criminal Contagion in Suharto's New Order," *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia*, ed. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2001), pp. 20–53; David Bourchier, "Crime, Law, and State Authority in Indonesia," in *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, ed. Arief Budiman (Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990), pp. 177–212; Justus M. van der Kroef, "'Petrus': Patterns of Prophylactic Murder in Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 25,7 (July 1985): 745–59.

¹⁶ Rudolf Mrázek, "From Darkness to Light: The Optics of Policing in Late-Colonial Netherlands East-Indies," in *Figures of Criminality in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Colonial Vietnam*, ed. Vicente L. Rafael (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999), pp. 23–46; Takashi Shiraishi, "Policing the Phantom Underground," *Indonesia* 63 (April 1997): 1–46; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1977).

machinery had important methodological implications too, also derived from Foucault. Whereas the idea of the bureaucratic polity drew attention to formal political decision-making as the main domain in which political power was expressed, a focus on the police state drew attention to power inscribed within the practices and techniques of rule: the architecture of prisons, the sciences of fingerprinting, the systems for classifying populations, and so forth.

Increasingly, however, the idea that the bureaucratic state exerted totalizing hegemonic control over society became subject to question. In some cases, this questioning took a historical form. Henk Schulte Nordholt, for example, challenged the myth of the orderly late-colonial state by drawing attention to "the *jago* in the shadow," charismatic thugs within the village-level criminal underworld who flourished in the shadow of the colonial state.¹⁷ Robert Cribb discovered that such toughs were also important in militias during the revolutionary period.¹⁸ During the 1990s, Ryter and Barker drew attention to similar figures, often referred to as *preman*, active at the margins of the New Order state.¹⁹ These charismatic and often criminalized figures were used as the "extended hands" (*perpanjangan tangan*) of the state to buttress the authority of its officials and its institutions, but they also sometimes asserted their own charismatic authority against that of the state. Drawing attention to such shadowy figures had the effect of contaminating the neat analytic boundaries that separated state from society. It also undermined the idea that all meaningful forms of power were located within the institutions, offices, and machinery of the bureaucracy.

This Indonesian studies storyline has parallels elsewhere in the world. The term "bureaucratic polity" was first coined by Fred Riggs writing about Thailand's military-dominated state.²⁰ Neostatist terms such as "corporatism" and "bureaucratic authoritarianism" belonged to a confident stream of post-World War II writing about the activist state.²¹ The idea that state institutions should be autonomous to be effective goes back to Samuel Huntington's influential book, *Political Order in Changing Societies*.²² The high-water mark of this analytical approach was the edited volume, *Bringing the State Back In*, which portrayed the generic modern state as actually autonomous and capable of independent action.²³ The term "neostatism" is used to distinguish this institutionally oriented approach from the more

¹⁷ Henk Schulte Nordholt, "The Jago in the Shadow: Crime and 'Order' in the Colonial State in Java," *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* 25,1 (1991): 74–92.

¹⁸ Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution, 1945–1949*, Southeast Asia Publications Series, no. 20 (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, Asian Studies Association of Australia, 1991).

¹⁹ Loren Ryter, "Pemuda Pancasila: The Last Loyalist Free Men of Suharto's Order?," *Indonesia* 66 (October 1998): 44–73; Barker, "State of Fear."

²⁰ Fred W. Riggs, *Thailand, the Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity* (Honolulu, HI: East-West Center Press, 1966).

²¹ Philippe C. Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends toward Corporatist Intermediation* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1979); Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1979).

²² Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).

²³ Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

philosophical state-centered ones common in the nineteenth century. It was also at about this time, in the 1980s, that some of the major neostatist statements were written for Indonesia.²⁴ The approach aimed to combat the apolitical behaviorism dominant in the social sciences in the 1960s and 1970s by stressing that the modern state's superior organizational and repressive resources gave it a great deal of autonomy to impose its will on society. Developmentalist regimes whose central preoccupation was to hone their nations' economic competitiveness (as Japan had done) ruled many Third World countries at this time.²⁵ All this makes it unsurprising that neostatist interpretations also placed their stamp on scholarly interpretations of the New Order state. They remain influential. The buzz words "epistemic community," "policy community," "policy networks," "state-building," and "statecraft" now found in multilateral agency publications advising governments about decentralization and other reforms betray the continuing importance of neostatist ideas. At a more sophisticated level, various strands of institutionalism continue to emphasize the power of institutions to constrain individual actions, but unlike analyses by the neostatists, these also bring into view other institutions, such as labor unions and business corporations.²⁶

In reality, as we shall see, the actually existing state in Indonesia is spread thin. It is fragmented, overwhelmed, and ineffective—characteristics it shares with states in most other developing countries. Intense political forces traverse its various parts. We cannot understand the state if we insist on seeing it as a single bureaucratic colossus with monopoly powers. Indeed, we ought to investigate how such a shambled set of organizations has managed to create the impression in the first place that it is the only show around. Answering that question forms the burden of this book.

The other main storyline adopted by Indonesianists in the past has something positive to say about this question. It does this by adopting more relational research strategies, and this means we can continue to learn from it for the task at hand. The next storyline begins with the recognition that, contrary to the views we have just described, state organizations do not exist by themselves but are filled out by elites who are themselves also part of society. These elites necessarily deploy various kinds of negotiated social capital beyond sheer bureaucratic muscle.

²⁴ McVey, "The Beamtenstaat in Indonesia"; Dwight Y. King, "Indonesia's New Order as a Bureaucratic Polity, a Neopatrimonial Regime or a Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regime—What Difference?," in *Interpreting Indonesian Politics*, ed. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson and Audrey Kahin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), pp. 104–16; Anderson, "Old State, New Society."

²⁵ Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State*, Cornell Studies in Political Economy (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

²⁶ The "new institutionalism" in political science is not a single school of thought but consists of three broad streams of analysis, each reacting against the behaviorism of the 1960s and 1970s. These three approaches are 1) historical institutionalism, 2) rational choice institutionalism, and 3) sociological institutionalism. See Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44,4 (1996): 936–57.

THE TRADITIONAL STATE: FROM PATRIMONIALISM TO NEO-PATRIMONIALISM

If the notion of the bureaucratic state is familiar to political scientists in the West, the storyline we discuss in this section is less so. Although it also focuses primarily on a rarefied class of rulers, its material is more anthropological and historical than that of straight political science. The conviction that other kinds of authority besides bureaucratic authority are important in the Indonesian context has long characterized scholarship about the state in this country. In the early post-World War II period, when scholars started studying Indonesia's "modernization," what many discovered made them doubt that the state was a rationalizing and liberalizing institution in the ways they had learned to expect. As a result, state studies in Indonesia have frequently treated the story about state modernization as something of a straw man, or at least an implicit object of comparison, rather than as an account of the way the Indonesian state actually developed. To explain—or at least to understand—why the story about the modernization of the state is not appropriate to Indonesia, another storyline has developed that has arguably had an even greater impact on research on the Indonesian state than has the bureaucratic storyline outlined above. This other storyline is characterized by a strong interest in those aspects of political organization and political culture that seem to differ from modern-day politics as practiced in the West. Some of the most detailed and interesting case studies of state power have focused on precisely these aspects, including Anderson's classic study of the concept of power in Javanese culture and Clifford Geertz's influential study of the traditional Balinese state, or *Negara*.²⁷ These studies develop a culturalist approach to studying state power: they seek to describe the cultural lens or system of meaning through which Indonesians—or Balinese or Javanese—make sense of political institutions and practices.

Both Anderson and Geertz sought to describe local variants of another Weberian ideal type of state: the patrimonial state. Weber (thinking of Ottoman Turkey) defined the patrimonial state by contrasting it to the modern bureaucratic state and argued that the latter had arisen from the former through the rationalization of political authority and the routinization of practices of rule. To explain why this had not happened in Indonesia, or what else might be going on there, both Anderson and Geertz tried to better understand the patrimonialism of the Indonesian state. They were not interested in European patrimonial states, however, but in local examples. Harking back to Heine-Geldern's work, *Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia*, they therefore sought to describe what power and the state meant within the Javanese and Balinese traditions.²⁸ Anderson based his account on primary Javanese

²⁷ Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture," in *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. Claire Holt (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 1–69; Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980). Anderson elaborated on Soemarsaid Moertono's work on Javanese kingdoms to argue that Sukarno's form of rule drew upon an indigenous concept of charismatic authority. See Soemarsaid Moertono, *State and Statecraft in Old Java: A Study of the Later Mataram Period, Sixteenth to Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1968).

²⁸ Robert Heine-Geldern, *Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1956 [1942]). Geertz first wrote about precolonial states in 1967 but published *Negara* much later. See Clifford Geertz, "Politics Past, Politics Present: Some Notes on the Uses of Anthropology in Understanding the New States," in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973 [1967]), pp. 327–41. Others writing in a similar vein during the 1960s and early 1970s included: Theodore G. Th. Pigeaud, *Java in the Fourteenth Century: A Study in Cultural History: The Nagara-Kertagama*

texts written in the seventeenth century and on contemporary observations of Sukarno's rule; Geertz relied on a combination of primary colonial texts describing the Balinese state and ethnographic accounts of postcolonial village life. While the studies differ in many respects, they both present images of states that are organized around what Geertz refers to as "exemplary centers":²⁹ courts and kings that are invested with charismatic power and that serve as microcosms for the ideal sociospatial organization of the kingdom and for the behaviors and qualities of leaders. Power is reproduced downward in a pyramidal social structure in which each level imitates the one above. With each step away from the center of power, the spiritual potency—or charisma—of the leader who occupies that position diminishes. In these states, the performance of power is privileged over the instrumental use of power. In Bali before the impact of the colonial state was felt, ritual and ceremony were not understood to be derivative of some more essential kind of power, like economic power or military might. On the contrary, as Geertz saw it, they were the state's *raison d'être*: "power served pomp not pomp power."³⁰ This did not mean that the social structure of the *Negara* was entirely determined by cultural ideals about exemplary centers and appropriate forms of kingly behavior. In fact, Geertz argued that there was a fundamental tension between the idea of the exemplary center and the structural segmentation of Balinese states.

Geertz claimed that the *Negara* was one of the few parts of Balinese culture not to survive colonialism. But cultural analyses of precolonial states were not only about the past. They were also part of an attempt to make sense of the dynamics of state power in the postcolonial era, especially those aspects of state power that did not conform to expectations about state modernization and the rise of liberal democracy. Anderson's essay was quite explicit in this regard, as he drew links between the old Javanese concept of power and contemporary politics in Sukarno's Indonesia. Anderson suggested that much of Sukarno's appeal to ordinary Indonesians might have to do with the fact that his leadership style fit so well with cultural understandings of how a charismatic leader ought to behave. It might also explain why people were willing to countenance his increasingly authoritarian rule: because

by Rakawi, *Prapañca of Majapahit, 1365 AD*, 3rd ed., 5 vols. (Leiden: KITLV, 1960–63); I. W. Mabbett, "Devaraja," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 10,2 (1969): 202–23; and M. C. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi, 1749–1792: A History of the Division of Java* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974). Several later studies document precolonial traditions of political authority and kingship elsewhere in the archipelago, such as Anthony Milner's study of a Malay kingdom, Shelly Errington's study of a kingdom in South Sulawesi, and Tony Day's study on longue durée indigenous influences on political culture today. See Anthony C. Milner, *Kerajaan: Malay Political Culture on the Eve of Colonial Rule* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1982); Shelly Errington, *Meaning and Power in a Southeast Asian Realm* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); Tony Day, *Fluid Iron: State Formation in Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002). These studies provide cultural analyses of precolonial states that differ somewhat from the cases described by Anderson and Geertz, while conforming to their method and reaching similar general conclusions about patrimonialism.

²⁹ Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali*, pp. 11–18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

it fit with traditional conceptions about power being highly concentrated in the person of the ruler.³¹

The idea that a patrimonial state with roots in Javanese culture might be making a comeback in postcolonial Indonesia has since been elaborated upon by several scholars.³² A number of features of the postcolonial state—such as the importance of patronage networks, the intensification of state ritual, leaders' appeals to ideals of Javanese statecraft, the rise of a new Javanese (military) aristocracy, and continued authoritarianism—seem to bear out such arguments. Ethnographers have also shown more generally that cultures of power resembling those of old have remained important well into the postcolonial era. Keeler, for instance, showed that in Java during the 1980s, ordinary people remained deeply conscious of, and interested in, how speech, ritual, and etiquette could be used to attain greater spiritual potency.³³ Errington made similar observations about Sulawesi.³⁴

While the cultural approach to studying the Indonesian state has been highly influential, particularly among anthropologists, it has also been subjected to several critiques. Up through the 1980s, two kinds of critiques predominated: those that challenged a characterization of the culture of power in a particular place and time; and those that challenged the cultural approach itself, arguing that state power was not culturally specific and that the focus on cultural meaning occluded the important role played by economy, violence, and instrumental politics in both the past and the present.³⁵ Perhaps the most devastating critiques, however, came in the 1990s after the idea of culture as a coherent, homogeneous, bounded, and timeless system of meanings had itself come under attack in anthropology.

In the Indonesian context, this attack took the form of Pemberton's pivotal genealogy of Javanese culture, which thoroughly historicized the subject of "Java."³⁶ Pemberton showed that the discourses and practices that came to be defined as Javanese culture emerged in the Javanese courts as a means to shore up the royalty's symbolic power in the face of its economic and military subordination by the Dutch. Over a period of centuries, the subject of "Java" was elaborated in a variety of ways, not just by court scholars but also by Dutch orientalist and American anthropologists, including Geertz. These various ideas about Javanese culture had

³¹ Han Resink once argued along similar lines. See G. J. Resink, "From the Old Ramayana Order to the New Mahabharata Order," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 131,2–3 (1975): 214–35.

³² Harold Crouch, "Patrimonialism and Military Rule in Indonesia," *World Politics* 31,4 (1979): 571–87; Mark T. Berger, "Old State and New Empire in Indonesia: Debating the Rise and Decline of Suharto's New Order," *Third World Quarterly* 18,2 (1997): 321–61.

³³ Ward Keeler, *Javanese Shadow Plays, Javanese Selves* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

³⁴ Errington, *Meaning and Power in a Southeast Asian Realm*.

³⁵ Examples of the former include Koentjaraningrat's critique of Anderson, and Hobart's critique of Geertz. Examples of the latter include Henk Schulte Nordholt's critique of Geertz. See Koentjaraningrat, "Kepemimpinan Dan Kekuasaan: Tradisional, Masa Kini, Resmi Dan Tak Resmi," in *Aneka Pemikiran Tentang Kuasa Dan Wibawa*, ed. Miriam Budiardjo (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1984), pp. 128–47; Mark Hobart, "Who Do You Think You Are? The Authorized Balinese," in *Localizing Strategies: Regional Traditions of Ethnographic Writing*, ed. Richard Fardon (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1990), pp. 303–38; Henk Schulte Nordholt, "Ça Comment: Comment on Clifford Geertz, 'What Is a State if It Is Not a Sovereign?'" *Current Anthropology* 45,5 (2004): 590–91.

³⁶ John Pemberton, *On the Subject of "Java"* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

important political effects. Pemberton describes how, during Suharto's rule, for instance, elements of "Javanese culture" were called upon through postmodern citation as a means to justify and normalize authoritarian rule. Pemberton's study marked a turning point in Indonesian state studies. By showing the manner in which concepts of Javanese "culture" and "tradition" were constructed, he made it impossible to treat culture as a simple explanatory variable. At the same time, Pemberton's approach did not abandon the study of "tradition" and "culture" entirely nor claim that culture was necessarily reducible to some other, supposedly more real, form of power.

There are sociological corollaries to Pemberton's argument. These scholars of the Indonesian state have characterized postcolonial Indonesian state power as neopatrimonial rather than patrimonial in form, by which they meant that relationships looked traditional but were in fact shaped by modern institutions of the state and capital. For Harold Crouch, Don Emmerson, and Dwight King, the relationship between rulers and ruled was not seen in cultural terms so much as sociological ones.³⁷ This relationship was about the personalization of state institutions and about the construction of patronage networks mediated by money rather than traditional deference. One rationale for such a characterization comes from an understanding of the way networks of patrons and clients were organized in the late-New Order Indonesian state. Rather than emerging from below, extending from villages into the centers of government, they emerged from within modern institutions at the center of government, such as the police, the army, and various government ministries, and extended out into provinces and villages. While this form of clientism might have been justified by appeals to tradition, in many ways it was clearly something new. Like Pemberton's study of "Java," the focus on neopatrimonialism draws attention to the constructed quality of this supposedly traditional kind of state.

Modern mass politics has been read in neopatrimonial terms for many years. Between the 1960s and the early 1990s, the relative ascendancy of various ideological or professional groupings within the state apparatus was portrayed primarily in terms of the attachments large groups of dependents had to certain elite figures. Writing about Java in the 1960s, Geertz used the Dutch model of political pillarization, so-called *aliran* or streams, as a means to describe the ideological basis of vertical solidarities between elements of the elite and the Indonesian people.³⁸ Communists, nationalists, traditionalist Islamists, and modernist Islamists each had their streams, often manifest in political parties and social or religious organizations, that helped link the components of the plural society to the political elite.³⁹ These streams could be mobilized, such that mass politics became more or less an expression of cleavages within the elite. Seen in these terms, the Sukarno era was characterized by competition among three main groupings: the army (allied with secular nationalists), Islamists, and communists. During the late-1950s and

³⁷ Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, rev. ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); Donald K. Emmerson, *Indonesia's Elite Political Culture and Cultural Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976); King, "Indonesia's New Order as a Bureaucratic Polity."

³⁸ Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Village," in *Local, Ethnic, and National Loyalties in Village Indonesia*, ed. G. William Skinner (New Haven, CT: Southeast Asian Program, Yale University, 1959), pp. 34-41.

³⁹ Herbert Feith and Lance Castles, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 14.

throughout the 1960s, the army became more and more powerful because of its role in suppressing regional rebellions and Islamic nationalism. With nationalists in ascendance, President Sukarno used the communists in the early 1960s as a counterbalance to the growing strength of the army. This set the stage for the massacres of 1965–66, in which hundreds of thousands of people labeled communists were killed. It also set the stage for a systematic takeover of the levers of the state by army officers cum bureaucrats. By the early-1980s, the state was cloaked in nationalist ideology and had become impossible to distinguish from the army that had taken it over.

The connection between the “modern” and “traditional” storylines of the state runs through Max Weber. When American sociologists rediscovered Weber in the 1960s, and Guenther Roth and S. N. Eisenstadt wrote their classic statements introducing neopatrimonialism to the political science literature, Indonesianists began to take it up too.⁴⁰ Many of them wrote about Indonesia both in terms of bureaucratic and (neo)patrimonial power, but always in separate publications emphasizing either one or the other, in keeping with Weber’s ideal-typical distinction. For example, Anderson wrote about Javanese patrimonial power but also about the importance of the bureaucratic machinery; Geertz wrote on the patrimonial heritage of the *Negara* but also on the problem of integrating new forms of rule with old; and Liddle argued that Indonesia two decades after Suharto took over was moving from personal to institutionalized forms of rule.⁴¹ This rapprochement between two formerly separate storylines, the one about patrimonialism and the other about the modern bureaucratic state, is actually a fortunate development. According to an important paper by Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, Weber sent everyone on a wild goose chase by exaggerating the distinction between legal-rational and patrimonial authority.⁴² In reality, all modern organizations require and have elements of both styles of authority. Patrimonialism is simply another word for leadership. It is the personal oversight that can prevent conflicts within an otherwise impersonal bureaucracy from becoming destructive. This indicates we should not lose sight of either institutions or personalized networks. In fact, the rapprochement between these two analytical approaches had begun earlier, before Rudolph and Rudolph made it explicit—the bureaucratic polity model developed by Riggs, Girling, and Jackson had many patrimonial elements. Andrew MacIntyre for this reason conflated the two as a single theoretical cluster, and concluded that, “hand in hand,” the two together constituted “conventional wisdom.”⁴³

⁴⁰ Guenther Roth, “Personal Rulership, Patrimonialism, and Empire Building in the New States,” *World Politics* 20,2 (January 1968): 194–206; S. N. Eisenstadt, *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neo-Patrimonialism* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1973).

⁴¹ Anderson, “The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture”; Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, “Further Adventures of Charisma,” in *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia*, ed. Benedict R. O’G. Anderson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990 [1985]), pp. 78–93; Anderson, “Old State, New Society”; Geertz, *Negara*; Clifford Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); and R. William Liddle, “Soeharto’s Indonesia: Personal Rule and Political Institutions,” *Pacific Affairs* 58,1 (1985): 68–90.

⁴² Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, “Authority and Power in Bureaucratic and Patrimonial Administration: A Revisionist Interpretation of Weber on Bureaucracy,” *World Politics* 31,2 (January 1979): 195–227.

⁴³ Andrew MacIntyre, *Business and Politics in Indonesia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991), p. 8.

As with the storyline focused on the modern bureaucratic state, the one about the traditional state has parallels elsewhere. It emerges in studies of many—particularly poor African—postcolonial countries in order to account for the minimal presence of the modern state. This creates a new set of problems that were not noticed by those working on late capitalist societies. In postcolonial countries, the modern state looks like an alien outpost in a society marked by strong alternative solidarities. Therefore, in addition to dealing with the familiar problems involving the relationship between the state and capital, the state and powerful elites, or the state and civil society, this theoretical approach must also concern itself with the possibility that vast expanses of society lie beyond the reach of anything resembling a modern state at all. The debate is thus about the precise extent of influence that the modern state is able to exercise when it is poorly resourced. For that reason, we turn our attention below to the actual presence of state officials on the ground in Indonesia. This will give us a good empirical basis on which to design our own research agenda on the state. However, before doing that we need to take up two more storylines.

TWO OTHER STORYLINES: CLASS AND DEMOCRACY

We take up the storylines of class and democracy more briefly, not because they are unimportant in their own right, but because they do not contribute strong new views on the nature of the state in Indonesia. The first is the story of the growing importance of capital. It is as elite-focused as the two storylines discussed above, and in Indonesia it still trains attention on the power of the bureaucracy, as did the storyline on the modern state. The difference is that this storyline portrays state power holders not merely in their surveillance and policing roles, but also in their roles as economic predators. It was not until the mid-1980s, with Richard Robison's *The Rise of Capital*, that the political economic basis for the national elites began to receive much attention.⁴⁴ In Robison's view, the rise of the army and a bureaucratic elite should be understood as the rise of a politico-bureaucratic capitalist class. This class became increasingly ensconced in power throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as it managed to repress mass politics and marginalize the nascent indigenous bourgeoisie, represented by the modernist Islamic grouping. This class was involved in two kinds of enterprise: state-owned enterprises, which became progressively more capitalist in orientation, providing officials with ever more opportunities for corruption and patronage; and enterprises owned by people in the private sector, usually Chinese Indonesians whose status as pariah capitalists ensured their continued dependence on their politico-bureaucratic patrons.⁴⁵ Within the storyline that focuses on the capture of the state by bureaucratic capitalists, the most notable changes in the state during the New Order were its gradual Islamization and its increasingly oligarchic form. During the 1990s, Suharto began to court the support of indigenous capitalists and Muslim intellectuals in order to provide a counterbalance to the power of the military and ethnic Chinese capital. For the most part, the Muslim-oriented bourgeoisie that had helped Suharto into power had remained

⁴⁴ Richard Robison, *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986).

⁴⁵ The pariah status of the Chinese has a long history dating back to colonial times, but Suharto-era policies singled out Chinese-Indonesians for discrimination by banning Chinese holidays, Chinese-language schools, and anything written in Chinese characters.

marginalized during the 1970s and 1980s, leading to anti-Chinese sentiments and periodic anti-Chinese violence.⁴⁶ From the 1990s, Suharto sought to capitalize on these sentiments by placing a growing emphasis on Islam within the culture of the state⁴⁷ and by making a place for non-Chinese capitalists within the elite. Some of these indigenous capitalists were selected to become part of an emerging oligarchy centered around the Suharto family and the families of a number of other high officials, such as the long-time minister of technology and Suharto's eventual successor, Habibie. This oligarchy leveraged its superior political power to establish close alliances with international capital and to co-opt or marginalize any potential competitors who might emerge from within the military and the bureaucracy. Over the years, the members of this oligarchy—known in Indonesian as *konglomerat* (conglomerates)—managed to extend the reach of their familial empires to the farthest limits of the Indonesian state and economy, and beyond.⁴⁸

According to Vedi Hadiz and Richard Robison, the end of the New Order has not been accompanied by any fundamental changes in the structure of Indonesia's elite.⁴⁹ Attempts by the IMF and other lenders to use the economic crisis as a means to impose neoliberal reforms on Indonesia have not had the effect of dislodging the politico-bureaucratic elite. The oligarchy has loosened up somewhat, since the most prominent oligarchs of the New Order have been pushed off center stage, but the basic structure of the national elite has remained largely intact.

Persuasive as this focus on elite power is, it is not without problems. In reality, elites do not have as much freedom of action as many analysts would seem to assume. Relations between the elite and the masses are asymmetrical but not one-way. Only rarely can elites deploy violence against those who displease them. Much more often, they must use persuasion to build alliances with followers who expect to receive something in return. Furthermore, the interests of different elites do not always coincide—as illustrated by the reverses suffered by military elites in 1998 and the gains booked by business and regional elites in the ensuing decade. Nor can capitalist elites assume that the state institutions they wish to manipulate are simply instruments in their hands. Even in Indonesia, one of the world's most corrupt countries, a businessman like Tommy Suharto (former President Suharto's son) does occasionally go to jail. Particularly in the case of political elites who need to mobilize large numbers of people, the problems of legitimation are severe. The final storyline takes up some of these problems.

The final storyline is about democracy. It is particularly important not to overlook it because Indonesia is today, once again, a democratic polity. The classic study about Indonesian democratization is Herbert Feith's book on the democratic

⁴⁶ The New Order sought to gain control over Islamic politics by incorporating both traditionalists and modernists into one political party and by bureaucratizing religion. The latter policy was particularly effective with modernists, who were more susceptible to bureaucratic manipulation. It was less successful with traditionalists, who remained marginalized and emerged as some of the most vocal critics of the regime. See Ruth T. McVey, "Faith as the Outsider: Islam in Indonesian Politics," in *Islam in the Political Process*, ed. James P. Piscatori (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 199–225.

⁴⁷ Kenneth M. George, "Designs on Indonesia's Muslim Communities," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57,3 (1998): 698–701.

⁴⁸ Ross H. McLeod, *The Suharto Franchise* (forthcoming).

⁴⁹ Richard Robison and Vedi R. Hadiz, *Reorganising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), p. 190.

1950s.⁵⁰ Although the overall narrative of this book describes a decline of constitutional democracy and the rise of increased authoritarianism by the late 1950s, it does not leave the reader with the sense that this trajectory was inevitable. Rather, the book adopts a concept of political process as open in a way that enables many centers of elite power to compete with one another on a relatively level playing field. The outcome is contingent on many factors, as each center of power is, at least to some degree, held in check. Elites do play central roles. Feith estimated the Indonesian elite at that time at "200–500 persons, mainly Jakarta residents,"⁵¹ and he is best known for his distinction between administrators and solidarity makers. The first group ran the complex machinery of government; members of the second were skilled at mobilizing the population. In the optimistic modernization literature of the time, elites were not seen as parasitic, but as a vanguard, the best a society can produce.

Even during the repressive New Order, several scholars saw a degree of political pluralism others did not. Dwight King's term "bureaucratic authoritarianism" covered some limited articulation between the state and extra-state organizations interested in business, religion, sports, and so on. In King's view, the state hoped by means of "state corporatism" to restrict rather than facilitate such articulation, so his contribution remained a state-centered analysis.⁵² Since the early 1990s, studies on Indonesian democratization have flourished, often referring back to Feith's book and that of his Cornell University supervisor, George Kahin, who had written a similarly optimistic book portraying the 1945 national revolution as essentially democratic.⁵³

The recent institutional studies echo an international literature triggered by Huntington's *Third Wave* and developed in texts by Juan J. Linz and Larry

⁵⁰ Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁵² King, "Indonesia's New Order as a Bureaucratic Polity." Bill Liddle took a less abstract approach when he demonstrated by means of a detailed case study of the development of policy on rice and sugar production in the early 1980s that "there is much more beneath-the-surface political activity in the New Order than the standard model of military and bureaucratic authoritarianism leads us to expect." While acknowledging that state officials were the key policy makers, he showed that "[o]ther significant—sometimes decisive—actors include local officials; organized and unorganized producers, intermediaries, and consumers; members of parliament; and the press and intellectual community." See R. William Liddle, "The Politics of Shared Growth: Some Indonesian Cases," *Comparative Politics* 19,2 (January 1987): 129.

⁵³ George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952). These relatively new studies of Indonesian democratization include a growing corpus of biographies of Westernizing Indonesian democrats, such as Sjahrir or Yap Thiam Hien, admiring descriptions of emerging civil-society movements, and institutional studies on emerging democracy in Indonesia. See J. D. Legge, *Intellectuals and Nationalism in Indonesia: A Study of the Following Recruited by Sutan Sjahrir in Occupation Jakarta* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1988); Daniel Lev, *Yap Thiam Hien* (forthcoming); Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Arief Budiman, ed., *State and Civil Society in Indonesia* (Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990); David Bourchier and John Legge, eds., *Democracy in Indonesia: 1950s and 1990s* (Clayton, Victoria: Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994); Anders Uhlin, *Indonesia and the "Third Wave of Democratization": The Indonesian Pro-Democracy Movement in a Changing World* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1997); and Marco Bünte and Andreas Ufen, eds., *Democratization in Post-Suharto Indonesia* (London: Routledge, 2008).

Diamond.⁵⁴ These studies fall comfortably in the classic Western tradition of pluralism. It is typical of this tradition that it does not have a strong concept of the state. A kind of “semi-organized stalemate” occurs as negotiations take place within and beyond a state that is extremely fragmented. “Actor network theory,” “social capital,” “governance” (a term that goes beyond the government to include nongovernmental organizations), and “civil society” are concepts that frequently recur in the voluminous literature produced by international NGOs and multilateral agencies in the period around 1998. Although the storyline of democracy sometimes sounds naively optimistic, and it is in fact the least historically interested of the four we have discussed, it could be particularly suitable for understanding the competitive politics of a fragmented state we are about to describe. At the same time, however, this storyline assumes a reasonably well-functioning state to guarantee the usual democratic freedoms and the institutions that help secure them—such as a judiciary, for example. This is a problem in Indonesia, a condition we will now explore.

PATCHINESS OF THE STATE IMPRINT

The local studies reported in this book emphasize the institutional patchiness of the Indonesian state. Considered as a single entity, the state is certainly the largest organization in the country. But it becomes clear that Indonesia is only lightly governed if one compares the size of its state apparatus with that of other countries on a per capita basis, as we do in the tables below. This only slowly changing statistical fact should have given pause to theorists who posited a high degree of state autonomy in Indonesia, and we have not even begun to discuss the institutional diversity that such figures tend to hide. The World Bank periodically ranks the quality of perceived “governance” in every country in the world on the basis of six aggregated indicators: i) Voice and Accountability; ii) Political Instability and Violence; iii) Government Effectiveness; iv) Regulatory Quality; v) Rule of Law; and vi) Control of Corruption.⁵⁵ At the bottom, with the lowest governance scores in 2007, were broken countries like Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Myanmar, and Somalia. Consistently at the top were Luxembourg, the Scandinavian countries, Singapore, and Switzerland. On a percentage ranking between 0 percent (worst) and 100 percent (best), Indonesia ranked in the bottom half on all indicators: 43 percent on voice and accountability, a surprisingly low 15 percent on political instability and violence, 42 percent and 44 percent on government effectiveness and regulatory quality, respectively, and a low 27 percent on both rule of law and control of corruption. In government effectiveness it was on a par with Russia and Vietnam. Countries with poor governance indicators also have low human development

⁵⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK, and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Larry Diamond et al., eds., *Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies: Themes and Perspectives* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

⁵⁵ Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi. “Governance Matters VII: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators, 1996–2007,” published by the World Bank, Washington, DC, 2008. The report, dataset, and an interactive web version are available at <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/> (as of March 2009).

indices (HDI).⁵⁶ Along with Vietnam, Indonesia is a developing country ranked as enjoying “medium human development”—whereas the Democratic Republic of Congo has “low” and Norway, Luxembourg, and Singapore have “high human development” (Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan had no HDI).

Calculating abstract indicators like “control of corruption” is an interpretive task and, no doubt, a peculiar World Bank obsession, but a similar picture of a country only lightly touched by the modern state emerges if we tabulate more concrete numbers. Table 1, on the next page, uses an eclectic choice of indicators for an illustrative group of countries ranging from Angola (low development), through a number of medium-development countries, mostly in Asia, to Belgium (high development). These comparative statistics lead to the following conclusions.

- Indonesia does not tax heavily. Like other medium-level development countries in our little group, it collects less than half the percentage of GDP in tax that a developed country like Belgium collects (18 percent as compared with 43 percent, both in 1990). In absolute terms, this means Indonesia’s total government tax revenue was, in that year, only a quarter that of Belgium’s, which has a population twenty times smaller than Indonesia. This shows up in a related statistic: Indonesia has a comparatively small number of civil servants as a proportion of the population (2.0 percent in 1997). The government spends most of its tax revenues on traditional governance functions such as administration, leaving little to spend on modern state functions, such as healthcare and education.⁵⁷
- On healthcare spending, Indonesia rates among the lowest—its investment is lower than Angola’s, less than half that of Thailand, less than a fifth of Colombia’s expenditures, but about the same as India’s. People are expected to pay for healthcare privately, though in Indonesia few can afford to (as shown by the much lower private healthcare expenditure figures in Indonesia than in India). However, Indonesia does comparatively well with a little public money. Community healthcare programs are apparently effective, as Indonesia’s child mortality rates are better than those found in India or Angola.
- On education, Indonesia was, until recently, the country that invested by far the lowest percentage of its resources compared with others in this small group. Indeed, Indonesia’s expenditure on public education as a percentage of GDP remains among the lowest in the world—only Equatorial Guinea spends less. Again, as with public healthcare, the money is spent on basics and invested relatively effectively—adult literacy rates are comparatively high.
- Is Indonesia militarized? Not really, if we consider only the numbers. Indonesia has only about a third the number of soldiers per 10,000 population that Belgium has, just over a quarter the number in Thailand or

⁵⁶ UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008—Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, for United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2007), updated regularly at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>.

⁵⁷ UNPAN, “Basic Data on Government Expenditure and Taxation (1990–2002),” published by the United Nations Public Administration Programme (UNPAN), New York, NY, 2002.

Table 1: Some Indicators of State Effectiveness Worldwide

	Angola	India	Indonesia	Thailand	Colombia	Belgium
Development*	Low	Med	Med	Med	Med	Hi
Human Development Index (HDI), rank*	160	128	107	78	75	17
HDI*	0.446	0.619	0.728	0.781	0.791	0.946
Population (millions)*	16.1	1134.4	226.1	63.0	44.9	10.4
Total government tax revenue (percentage of GDP, 1990)**	—	15	18	19	—	43
Health expenditure—Public (percentage of GDP) [†]	2.1	1.3	1.2	3.1	6.7	6.5
Health expenditure—Private (percentage of GDP) [†]	2.9	4.8	2	1.3	1.4	2.6
Infant mortality—Under five years old, per 1,000 live births [†]	260	85	38	21	21	5
Education expenditure—Public (percentage of GDP)*	2.6	3.8	0.9	4.2	4.8	6.1
Education expenditure—Public (percentage of total government expenditure)*	6.4	10.7	9.0	25.0	11.1	12.2
Net secondary enrollment ratio (%)*	—	—	58	64	55	97
Adult literacy rate*	67	61	90	93	93	—
Defense expenditure (percentage of GDP) ^{††}	4.3	2.9	3.0	1.2	4.1	1.3
Armed forces (minus reserves & paramilitary) ^{††}	108,000	1,325,000	302,000	307,000	207,000	37,000
Armed forces (per 10,000 national population) ^{††}	72	12	14	49	47	36
Combat-capable aircraft ^{††}	90	886	94	165	30	89
Prison population (per 100,000 national population) ^{†††}	44	29	38	264	152	88

Sources: * UNDP⁵⁸ ** UNPAN⁵⁹ † WHO⁶⁰ †† IISS⁶¹ ††† Walmsley⁶²

⁵⁸ UNDP, "Human Development Report 2005," Tables 1, 6, 11. Note: Indonesian education expenditures have risen in recent years, but they still fall behind those of Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. The World Bank, "Spending for Development: Making the Most of

Colombia, and less than a fifth of the number found in war-torn Angola. In this regard, Indonesia is comparable to India. Even in absolute terms, its armed forces amount to little. Though it is the world's fourth largest country in terms of population, Indonesia has about as many combat-capable aircraft as Belgium, whose population is just 5 percent of Indonesia's.

- Police force ratios are more difficult to obtain worldwide, but with 13 police personnel per 10,000 people, Indonesia falls at the bottom of the widely accepted "normal" range of 10 to 40 per 10,000.
- The low police force ratio translates to far fewer prison inmates than in many other countries. At 38 prisoners per 10,000 population, Indonesia has only a twentieth the incarceration ratio of the world's top prisoner, the United States.

These are all national averages. Disaggregating by province demonstrates that the light touch of government is even lighter in some parts of Indonesia than the average. Table 2, below, shows that only a third of villages in East and West Nusa Tenggara provinces are connected to a state electricity supply, whereas in North Sumatra the figure is over 80 percent. Statistics concerned with access to asphalt roads shows a parallel pattern. Even within provinces the variability is high. The number of villages with access to a sealed road in East Nusa Tenggara varies between 10 percent in one district to 70 percent in another, while even in Yogyakarta, with an average of 80 percent, access varies from 50 to 100 percent from one district to another.⁶³ Neither Yogyakarta nor most of East Nusa Tenggara (except Flores) have particularly forbidding terrain that might make road construction problematic, but the population densities are lower in these eastern islands than in Java. Education standards in Jakarta are as high as in many other developing countries, but in eastern Indonesia they resemble those in a poor African country.⁶⁴ The per capita tax revenues available to provincial and district governments also vary widely. The effect of post-1998 decentralization has been that regions with valuable natural resources, such as East Kalimantan and Riau, get to keep a much bigger proportion of it for themselves than formerly, leaving poorly endowed regions, such as East Nusa Tenggara as well as Java, at a disadvantage.⁶⁵ We imagine that the police and military presence would show similar geographical variability, but we lack the figures to confirm this theory. Residents in some places will rarely see a

Indonesia's New Opportunities—Indonesia Public Expenditure Review 2007," published by the World Bank, Jakarta, 2007.

⁵⁹ UNPAN, "Basic Data on Government Expenditure and Taxation (1990–2002)," Table A10.

⁶⁰ WHO, "World Health Statistics 2006," published by the World Health Organization, Geneva, 2006.

⁶¹ IISS, "The Military Balance 2006," published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 2006.

⁶² Roy Walmsley, "World Prison Population List (Sixth Edition)," published by the International Centre for Prison Studies, King's College, London, 2005.

⁶³ The World Bank, "Spending for Development," p. 89.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

soldier or policeman, whereas other locations are overrun with them, though the considerations might have more to do with security perceptions than with budgets.

Table 2: Percentage of Villages with State Electricity by Province, 2007

East Nusa Tenggara	30 %
West Nusa Tenggara	34 %
Papua	34 %
Gorontalo	46 %
Southeast Sulawesi	49 %
Lampung	51 %
Central Sulawesi	52 %
North Maluku	53 %
South Sumatra	56 %
Jambi	56 %
Maluku	56 %
Bengkulu	57 %
Central Kalimantan	57 %
West Kalimantan	60 %
Riau	60 %
Central Java	65 %
South Sulawesi	70 %
West Sumatra	70 %
East Java	71 %
South Kalimantan	71 %
North Sulawesi	72 %
Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam	73 %
Bali	75 %
West Java	76 %
Bangka Belitung	78 %
Banten	79 %
East Kalimantan	80 %
Yogyakarta	83 %
North Sumatra	83 %

Source: World Bank.⁶⁶

"Patchiness" means there are places where the government's presence is concentrated, as well as great swathes where its presence is strictly minimal. When we ask where these might be, the answer curiously contradicts our earlier broad-brush conclusion that poorly endowed, remote areas have a weak physical state presence. State offices typically cluster in towns. It is easy to show that, if we compare those towns across Indonesia where the government maintains offices, the state actually becomes numerically *more* intrusive as we move out into the remoter provinces. The analysis runs as follows. The number of state personnel in a particular administrative area in proportion to the population tends to grow larger as the population density decreases. Indonesia's poorly developed areas, such as eastern

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

Indonesia, are thinly populated and less urbanized compared to Java. Towns in those areas are less industrialized,⁶⁷ so that state administration and trade are the top two economic activities. The ironic consequence of these dynamics combined is that towns in poorly developed areas have a disproportionately high presence of state institutions. How can we measure this? We know the number of civil servants in each province, but we do not have readily available statistics on the size of urban working populations. Instead, we take the proportion of civil servants to the working population who are not farmers (since most farms are rural). Table 3 shows that some outer island provinces have four or five times as many civil servants, proportionately, among their non-agricultural working populations as does Java.

Table 3: Percentage of Civil Servants to Non-Agricultural Workers, 1998

Central Java	7.5 %
East Java	7.8 %
West Java	8.7 %
Bali	10.0 %
Indonesia	11.5 %
Lampung	12.0 %
Yogyakarta	12.4 %
East Kalimantan	14.1 %
North Sumatra	14.4 %
Jakarta	14.5 %
West Nusa Tenggara	14.8 %
South Sumatra	14.8 %
South Kalimantan	15.5 %
Riau	17.8 %
South Sulawesi	18.5 %
West Kalimantan	19.1 %
West Sumatra	20.3 %
Central Kalimantan	20.7 %
Aceh	20.7 %
Jambi	21.8 %
North Sulawesi	22.8 %
East Nusa Tenggara	24.3 %
Irian Jaya	29.3 %
Central Sulawesi	31.8 %
Southeast Sulawesi	32.2 %
Maluku	33.1 %
Bengkulu	45.2 %

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Indonesia*, Jakarta: BPS (annual).⁶⁸

⁶⁷ USAID-DRSP, "Stock Taking on Indonesia's Recent Decentralization Reforms," published by USAID Democratic Reform Support Program (DRSP), Jakarta, 2006, pp. 17-18.

⁶⁸ East Timor data not included. See Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, Routledge Contemporary Southeast Asia Series 15 (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 41.

In other words, we should not only think of a weak state presence, but of pockets of an intensive state presence (the towns, in particular their educated classes) amid great swathes of rural territory that is poorly colonized by state institutions. These pockets might turn out to be socially influential, even if they are not very effective at carrying out policy.

Studying the close connection between state institutions and members of the middle class in towns might help us resolve the biggest dilemma facing students of the state in Indonesia: Why is such an ineffective state yet so legitimate? Put more precisely, how do we explain the mismatch between the numerous and evident failures of governance, on the one hand, and the state's extraordinary legitimacy, its ideological force, which far outstrips these bureaucratic realities, on the other hand? Middle-class urban residents enjoy tremendous prestige, even (or especially) where they are vastly outnumbered by the poor in towns and out in the countryside. It is the middle-class city dwellers who shape the myths of state. Participation rates for elections, whether democratic or not, have always been high in Indonesia; millions of children and civil servants take part all over the nation, with little audible protest, in ritualistic weekly flag ceremonies; opinion polls show that most people agree with state propaganda on issues such as the dangers of communism or separatism. The legitimacy of the state, as perceived by its citizens and sustained by the urban middle-class bureaucrats in its employ, might explain why poor postcolonial states still manage to dominate their societies morally despite being functionally unable to do many of the things a modern state is widely expected to do.

The question of how to determine the true impact of the modern but under-resourced state is precisely the concern of a great deal of literature on postcolonial states. Some, like Jean-François Bayart, and Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, think the state's influence is strictly limited, and they attribute most of the political dynamics in underdeveloped countries to social patterns that have a history going back to precolonial times.⁶⁹ Much of the work done on the Indonesian state in the past has long been concerned with the same problematic, which it analyzed in historical terms. Tony Day recently developed a similar argument for Indonesia.⁷⁰ The argument is more sophisticated than, but reminiscent of, that made by O. W. Wolters on the cultural history of Southeast Asia's *mandala* polities.⁷¹ In Wolters's *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*, colonialism, the colonial state, the anticolonial struggle, and independence appear to have had no impact on Southeast Asia's "cultural matrix" (chapters 1 and 2) and its "soul stuff" (Appendix A). But others like Mahmood Mamdani or Catherine Boone believe the modern state's influence is much greater than meets the eye.⁷² To them, the state has a hegemonic power (of course not unconstrained by its own fragilities) to alter social

⁶⁹ Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London: Longman, 1993); Patrick Chabal, ed., *Political Domination in Africa: Reflections on the Limits of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999).

⁷⁰ Day, *Fluid Iron*.

⁷¹ O. W. Wolters, *History, Culture and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999).

⁷² Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Catherine Boone, "State Building in the African Countryside: Structure and Politics at the Grassroots," *Journal of Development Studies* 34,4 (April 1998): 1-31.

relations out of proportion to its apparent size. The reason is that it operates out of the towns on a socially vulnerable, thinly scattered agricultural population. These scholars sometimes draw on the ideas of Gramsci and Foucault to show that the state is able to exercise an ideological influence far exceeding its meager physical presence on the ground. We will return to this argument again below. We have found fresh inspiration in this older literature for our own work.

NEW RESEARCH AGENDAS ON THE STATE

When we turned to recent theoretical literature on the state in general, we found it increasingly focused on fragmentation and competition, while assigning notions of grand unities to ideology. This literature is particularly harsh on the state-qua-state approach that we termed the "modern state" storyline. It urges an ethnographic approach to the actually existing state that takes the level of analysis down to a more local level. The recent decentralization and democratization moves in Indonesia have made this a particularly appropriate moment to reconsider our entire approach to the Indonesian state, and to learn to see the country in a more local, ethnographic, and competitive light. As we shall show, little of the modern state storyline survives in our findings, but elements of the other storylines do and indeed acquire a renewed relevance.

A milestone in the new literature on the state was a short article by Philip Abrams.⁷³ It was directed particularly against two Marxist writers on the state, Ralph Miliband and Nicos Poulantzas, who, according to Abrams, had deployed an overly concrete notion of the state. Abrams's critique could as well have been aimed against non-Marxist neostatists, such as Theda Skocpol.⁷⁴ "The state, then," wrote Abrams, "is not an object akin to the human ear. Nor is it even an object akin to human marriage. It is a third-order object, an ideological project."⁷⁵ He proposed making a distinction between studying the "state-system" and the "state-idea." The state-system is a cluster of institutions that exert political and executive control, and their key personnel. Questions about how the state-system and the state-idea relate to each other, and how they relate as an ensemble to other forces and elements in society, should produce insights into the actual disunity of the state. The state-idea is

⁷³ Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1,1 (1988): 58–89, reprinted in *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, Blackwell Readers in Anthropology, no. 9, ed. Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

⁷⁴ Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in *Bringing the State Back In*, ed. Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 3–37.

⁷⁵ Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," p. 76. An earlier skeptic about the positivity of the state was Hans Kelsen, who rejected the Weberian assertion "that the state is not merely a juristic but a sociological entity, a social reality existing independently of its legal order." See Hans Kelsen, *General Theory of Law and State*, Twentieth-Century Legal Philosophy Series, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945), p. 183. Another was A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, who advised anthropologists not to study the state because it "does not exist in the phenomenal world; it is a fiction of the philosophers." He had in mind a large concept of the state, "represented as being an entity over and above the human individuals who make a society, having as one of its attributes something called 'sovereignty,' and sometimes spoken of as having a will ... or as issuing commands." A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, "Preface," in *African Political Systems*, ed. M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (London: Oxford University Press, 1970 [1940]), pp. xi–xxiii.

the image that the state projects about itself. It is an imagined construction, and studying it should be an exercise in unmasking an ideology.

Since the publication of Abrams's article, others have urged a similar two-pronged research agenda. The anthropologist's eye is particularly suited for the close observation this agenda requires.⁷⁶ Joel Migdal has done much to bring the proposal into mainstream political science.⁷⁷ His target, too, was the neostatist image of the effective, activist state, which, as we saw above, has also been influential in scholarship focused on Indonesia. Migdal called it the "beachhead imagery,"⁷⁸ an analytical construct in which a center exerts its will over a periphery, an elite over a mass, or a Great Tradition over many little traditions. In reality, actually existing states are invariably weaker than they claim to be. Adopting Bourdieu's term "field," Migdal offered a two-part definition of the state to match the two-part research agenda. It at once highlighted the competitive character of a state's internal operation and the state's own ideological efforts to hide that competition:

The state is a field of power marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by (1) the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory, and (2) the actual practices of its multiple parts.⁷⁹

Since Migdal introduced this approach, the first part of the two-pronged agenda—namely, the study of the "state idea" as an ideological construct (or what Migdal called the state "image")—has become an important research focus for scholars. The objective is to expose images of the state that suggest it has a single will, an institutional coherence, one sovereignty, clear "national" enemies—in short,

⁷⁶ In a landmark volume edited by Dell Hymes, a group of anthropologists foreswore the depoliticization of anthropology that had been commonplace hitherto. Laura Nader and Eric Wolf were among the contributors. Nader urged her fellows to study institutionalized power hierarchies from the bottom upwards, and Wolf called for them to incorporate global processes in the way they—the researchers—reconstructed power historically. See Dell Hymes, ed., *Reinventing Anthropology* (New York, NY: Random House, 1969). J. Gledhill later wrote a programmatic overview of "political anthropology." It contained practical suggestions for studying local political practices in a way that recognized their "multilayered complexity": "This includes political action in everyday life and the symbols and rituals associated with these everyday political actions, the concretization of 'political culture' at the point where power is affirmed and contested in social practice." See J. Gledhill, *Power and Its Disguises: Anthropological Perspectives on Politics*, 2nd ed. (London: Pluto, 1994), p. 22.

⁷⁷ Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Migdal has inspired a number of comparative research projects around the theme of the state as a fractured, competitive field of power. Non-Western countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America have been of special interest in this research effort. See Joel S. Migdal, Aful Kohl, and Vivienne Shue, eds., *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Peter Dauvergne, ed., *Weak and Strong States in Asia-Pacific Societies* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1998); Klaus Schlichte, ed., *The Dynamics of States: The Formation and Crises of State Domination* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); and unpublished papers presented at the workshop "The Artifices of Government. On the Appropriation, the Use and the Formation of States," Max Planck Institute, Halle, Germany, July 20–21, 2006. See summary at <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=1288> (as of March 2009).

⁷⁸ Migdal, *State in Society*, p. 199.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

undisputed authority. "We need to cut off the king's head: in political theory it still needs to be done," wrote Foucault.⁸⁰ Anthropologies of meaning, symbols, rituals, discourses, myths, law, fetishes, education, pop culture, and much more can all provide fresh insights, as can Foucault's notion of governmentality.⁸¹ Foucault was interested not in the institutional mechanics of government but in the art of government, in skilled discursive practices. He depicted an autonomous rationality of government that disciplined its citizens into conforming to various government projects almost without their realizing it. Even before Foucault, Marx and Weber had written about the impersonal forces of capital and the state that were creating new human subjectivities.⁸² Although Foucault had no eye for the postcolonial condition, his thinking has stimulated much fresh work on states of the global South, too, as we noted in the discussion on the police state above. Indeed, Indonesianists have had a major influence on this discussion. In the symbolic vein, Geertz's *Negara* is often quoted in these recent analyses as an example of indigenous image-making.⁸³ Rich insights into the prevailing image of state power during the New Order can also be found in Anderson's work on language and power and in Siegel's work on the role of the fetish of modernity and the trauma of the 1965–66 killings.⁸⁴ John Pemberton, Joshua Barker, and Tania Murray Li have, in different ways, each sought to develop

⁸⁰ Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," in Foucault, *Power*, ed. J. D. Fearon (New York, NY: The New Press, 2000 [1976]).

⁸¹ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1994); Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism, and Rationalities of Government* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London and Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999). As happened when *Bringing the State Back In* was published, this new turn in research was marked by an important edited volume: George Steinmetz, ed., *State, Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999). Of all the contributions in this volume, Timothy Mitchell's essay represents the culturalist end of the spectrum of opinion. Mitchell depicts the whole notion of the state as a culturally conditioned imaginary.

⁸² See Sayer's chapter, "Power and the Subject," in his 1991 book, and see also his coauthored volume on the creation of modern subjectivities, which he argues took place just as the modern state was emerging in Elizabethan England. Derek Sayer, *Capitalism and Modernity: An Excursus on Marx and Weber* (London: Routledge, 1991); and Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985).

⁸³ Geertz, *Negara*.

⁸⁴ Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); James T. Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); James T. Siegel, *A New Criminal Type in Jakarta: Counter-Revolution Today* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998). Some recent, insightful "anthropologies of the state" that have focused on Third World states include Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, eds., *States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Veena Das and Deborah Poole, eds., *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*, School of American Research Series (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research, 2004); Stuart Corbridge et al., *Seeing the State: Governance and Governmentality in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Christian Krohn-Hansen and Knut G. Nustad, eds., *State Formation: Anthropological Perspectives, Anthropology, Culture and Society* (London: Pluto Press, 2005); Sharma and Gupta, eds., *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*.

Foucaultian insights into Indonesian state power.⁸⁵ But as yet only some of this work has been done at the concrete level of place and life history that we have aimed at in this book.

The way images of the state are produced and circulated is another important part of this research prong. Often it is possible to identify specific projects in which state actors do ideological work to mobilize social forces around certain strategies. This was true of the parliamentarians in Loren Ryter's piece in this book, who deployed violent, authoritarian images learned from the New Order in order to intimidate their rivals to gain influence, and of the lower-class slum dwellers who, as described in Joshua Barker's piece, utilized traditional images of charismatic authority to assert local power in a context of deepening bureaucratic rule. We will return briefly to this point below.

The second prong of Abrams's research agenda concerns the "state-system," or what Migdal calls "actual state practices." It involves disaggregating the state, lowering the level of analysis below the national, studying interactions anthropologically, and looking for social forces rather than static structures. Rather than portraying the state as a single actor, as it is represented in the state-idea, this approach recognizes that, in reality, the state consists of numerous institutional actors, who compete with each other and with outsiders. Observing what state officials do, rather than what they say, exposes how this competition works. Bourdieu depicted social actors (individual or collective) positioned in a multidimensional social space, which is traversed by various kinds of social forces (economic, political, cultural).⁸⁶ All sorts of social organizations, state and non-state, compete in that space for the ultimate rule-making capacity. The struggle for authority is the key dynamic of the state. Struggles take place in different arenas, from "the trenches," where tax collectors and teachers directly confront their clients within society, through various offices in the field and in the capital, to the "commanding heights," where the top executives sit.⁸⁷ Officials in each arena are subject to a different set of social forces, which often pit them also against officials in other arenas. Society, too, is not a single integrated organism but a "mélange" of social organizations.⁸⁸ Local "strongmen" play a particularly interesting role in Migdal's account.⁸⁹ They are both partners with the state in its projects and often self-willed saboteurs of these same projects, depending on their own interests and opportunities. Migdal added: "For those interested in discerning how third-world societies are ruled and the influence of politics on social change, the local level often holds the richest and most instructive hints."⁹⁰

Competition within the polity as such is not a new theme in Indonesian studies. Authors who wrote about Indonesia's "bureaucratic polity" tended to see the state as

⁸⁵ Pemberton, *On the Subject of "Java"*; Barker, "State of Fear"; Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

⁸⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Theory and Society* 14,6 (1985): 723–44.

⁸⁷ Migdal, *State in Society*, pp. 117–24.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58–94.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

an arena in which elite cliques compete—either for the spoils of office,⁹¹ or at least partly over substantive policy issues.⁹² But these depictions have generally focused on the national level. Recent research on Indonesia's local politics has cast much light on the accommodative politics between local and metropolitan elites,⁹³ and the same strong local leaders make their presence felt in the current book as well. The proliferation of new administrative districts under decentralization is an example of local strongmen successfully asserting their will for greater administrative autonomy, despite repeated protests from the Indonesian Home Affairs minister that more new units are unnecessary. Careerism leads low-level officials to obstruct policies aimed at eliminating waste and corruption. Other internal competitive mechanisms are at work as well, all limiting the state's rule-making abilities. President Suharto often shuffled his top managers in order to prevent them from building up alternative loyalties. District chiefs and governors routinely appoint their managers on the basis of business interests or family obligations rather than merit.

Corruption has been an especially fruitful topic in this anthropological approach to actual state practices, particularly as it operates in poor countries. Akhil Gupta contrasted the popular discourse on corruption in India's suburban wastelands with actual practices of corruption in order to highlight the gulf between the widely accepted image of an idealized state (the state-idea) and the actual disunity of the state.⁹⁴ Close anthropological observation of officials engaged in these practices has resulted in new understandings of the state more broadly. William Reno's much-quoted notion of the "shadow state" resulted from his study of corruption in Sierra Leone. He concluded that officials engage in the black-market economy not merely for self-enrichment but because they draw "authority from their abilities to control markets and material rewards."⁹⁵ Indeed, if we take a historical view of such illegal but socially unavoidable competitive practices, crossing back and forth as they do between the state and the market, they appear to play a major role in the early stages of state formation in many countries, including the United States.⁹⁶ Our book, too,

⁹¹ As in Jackson, "Bureaucratic Polity."

⁹² As in Emerson, who used the term "bureaucratic pluralism." Donald K. Emerson, "Understanding the New Order: Bureaucratic Pluralism in Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 23,11 (November 1983): 1220–41.

⁹³ Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy, eds., *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003); Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken, eds., *Renegotiating Boundaries: Local Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV, 2007).

⁹⁴ Akhil Gupta, "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State," *American Ethnologist* 22 (1995): 375–402.

⁹⁵ William Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 2–3. More recent anthropologies of actual state practices focusing on corruption also draw their case material from Africa. See, for example, Giorgio Blundo and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *Everyday Corruption and the State: Citizens and Public Officials in Africa* (New York, NY: Zed, 2006); J. P. Olivier de Sardan, "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 37,1 (1999): 25–52; and Janet Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa*, In-Formation Series (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005). These studies form a sharp contrast with conventional studies on corruption that regard it as a deviation from a state norm still largely conceived in Weberian terms. See, for example, Susan Rose-Ackerman, *Corruption and Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁹⁶ Josiah McConnell Heyman, ed., *States and Illegal Practices* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

takes a close interest in clientelistic practices involving state officials. In Jacqueline Vel's chapter on Sumba, these practices are an essential element in the delicate political process of maintaining local ruling coalitions. In Syarif Hidayat and Gerry van Klinken's chapter on post-election politics in two Sumatran provinces, they likewise cement the broad alliances that are necessary in this democratic era.

The two-pronged strategy has been enlightening, but if it is accepted as the ultimate analytical method—the final new way to study the state—we may be left with two unrelated fields of enquiry on the same subject. Exactly how they might be brought together is the stuff of another research project. However, the main lines of this synthesis may go somewhat as follows. An important part of the problem is that the study of the fragmented state-system (that is, actual state practices) frequently occurs at a level that is so micro as to threaten to obscure the national altogether.⁹⁷ Migdal, for example, seemed so intent on seeing an irreducible plurality of arenas, social forces, and state practices that he eroded the possibility of gaining insight into more macro dynamics.⁹⁸ The British theorist of the state Bob Jessop has indicated a way forward. He began by recognizing that, on the one hand, the diversity of local meaning and practice is too great for any single macro-social order to be “uniquely necessary.” But, on the other hand, there are too many limits to this diversity to say everything is entirely “contingent.”⁹⁹ His “strategic-relational” approach to studying the state imposes some order on Migdal's somewhat amorphous collection of “state practices” and, at the same time, ties the “state image” to specific social forces.¹⁰⁰ Strategies, interests, and relationships are core concepts. Ultimately Jessop wants to understand the state in relation to a broader theory of society rather than as an entity on its own. In this respect he follows Gramsci, who argued that the state should be seen as the “integral state,” as political society + civil society.¹⁰¹ The two prongs, the

⁹⁷ Eric Wolf already foreshadowed this problem—the abandonment of macro dynamics—when, after commending three studies on the political anthropology of Central Africa, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala for taking “power” seriously, he suggested the authors could have accomplished more if they had dared to take their work to a more macro level by focusing on political economy and on organizations. Eric R. Wolf, “Distinguished Lecture: Facing Power—Old Insights, New Questions,” *American Anthropologist* 92,3 (1990): 586–96.

⁹⁸ When Migdal denied the utility of any “unifying framework (whether a ruling class, a consensus of norms about competition, or the state),” he was, we thought, in danger of throwing out the baby with the bathwater. When he repeatedly rejects class as a useful analytical tool (e.g., p. 65, *State in Society*), for example, he goes further than Bourdieu, who provided him with his notion of the fragmented competitive field and who similarly declared that conventional Marxist theory was now “the most powerful obstacle to the progress of the adequate theory of the social world,” but who nevertheless maintained that the set of fields that constituted the social space were “more or less strongly and directly subordinated, in their functioning and their transformations, to the field of economic production.” See Migdal, *State in Society*, p. 104; and Bourdieu, “The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups,” pp. 742, 736.

⁹⁹ Bob Jessop, *State Theory: Putting the Capitalist State in Its Place* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p. 242.

¹⁰⁰ See also Bob Jessop, “Narrating the Future of the National Economy and the National State: Remarks on Remapping Regulation and Reinventing Governance,” in *State, Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 378–405; Bob Jessop, “Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections, and Redirections,” *International Review of Sociology* 11,2 (July 2001): 149–73; and Bob Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic Relational Approach* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007).

¹⁰¹ This is not the place for an extensive review of Jessop's work, which looks to both Foucault and Poulantzas. We can sketch it briefly as follows. Rather than speak of disembodied state

practical and the ideological, are connected by social forces in the following formulation of a research program:

State theorists would focus on the distinctive ways in which the specific institutional and organizational ensemble identified as the state condenses and materializes social power relations *and* they would examine how the political imagery (in which ideas about the state play a crucial orientating role) is articulated, mobilizes social forces around specific projects and finds expression on the terrain of the state [emphasis added].¹⁰²

Applying these ideas to Indonesian state studies might help us to focus on actual state practices and to scale them up to help us understand Indonesian society as a whole. Doing so might thus allow us to invest fresh meaning into some weighty concepts that might otherwise seem threatened by the determined disaggregation of the state upon which we have here embarked—concepts like democracy, class, citizenship, and indeed the Indonesian nation itself. This is certainly a worthwhile goal.

practices, Jessop proposes examining formal, institutional processes such as representation, the distribution of powers within the state system, and state intervention in the economy and civil society. Here the state is seen as a complex institutional ensemble with its own modes of calculation and operational procedures. At a more ambitious level of research, corresponding to that of the state image, Jessop brings in behavioral or strategic dimensions. Three of these are the social nature of the power bloc supporting state power, state practices that define the boundaries of the state, and discourses that create illusions and define what the state is supposed to be and do. When one engages with this second group of behavioral and strategic dimensions of research, the state is seen no longer merely as government, but as a system of *political* domination. Jessop, *State Theory*, pp. 345–6. Unfortunately Jessop has taken no interest in the informality that characterizes Third World polities.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 367.

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NEGARA BELING: STREET-LEVEL AUTHORITY IN AN INDONESIAN SLUM¹

Joshua Barker

Voyoucracy is a corrupt and corrupting power of the street, an illegal and outlaw power that brings together into a voyoucratic regime, and thus into an organised and more or less clandestine form, into a virtual state, all those who represent a principle of disorder—a principle not of anarchic chaos but of structured disorder, so to speak, of plotting and conspiracy, of premeditated offensiveness or offenses against public order. Indeed, of terrorism, it will be said—whether national or international. Voyoucracy is a principle of disorder, to be sure, a threat against public order; but, as is a *cracy*, it represents something more than a collection of individual or individualistic voyous. It is the principle of disorder as a sort of substitute order. [...] The *voyoucracy* already constitutes, even institutes, a sort of counterpower or countercitizenship. It is what is called a *milieu*. This milieu, this environment, this world unto itself, gathers into a network all the people of the crime world or underworld, all the singular voyous. All individuals of questionable morals and dubious character whom decent, law-abiding people would like to combat and exclude under a series of more or less synonymous names: big man, bad boy, player, [...] rascal, hellion, good-for-nothing, ruffian, villain, crook, thug, gangster, shyster, [...] scoundrel, miscreant, hoodlum, hooligan [...].²

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² Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 66.

INTRODUCTION

In his recent book, *Planet of Slums*,³ Mike Davis argues that new patterns of urbanization have given rise to an immense and growing class of people living in urban slums. Citing statistics from the UN Human Settlements Programme report *The Challenge of Slums*, he notes that in 2001 there were about 924 million people living in slums worldwide and that slum dwellers constitute a third of the global urban population. At least half of the huge slum population is under twenty-five years old. Over the next several decades, almost all global population growth is projected to take place in cities, and almost all of this growth will take place in the slums of the less-developed world.

Historically, slum dwellers have generally been seen as part of the so-called lumpen proletariat: a class that, in Marx's famous phrase, "cannot represent themselves, they must be represented."⁴ Whereas Marx saw this class as an undifferentiated mass of people unable to recognize themselves as part of a class, scholars increasingly have started to argue that the world's slum dwellers may yet prove to be a potent political force. Mike Davis describes slum dwellers as overlapping with a vast "informal proletariat" and argues that this proletariat may prove to be the most potent mass political force of the twenty-first century.

A key theme of Davis's argument, and one repeated in a number of other works, is the idea that the "informal proletariat" is a social class that has been left to its own devices by the modern state. Especially when it is found in slums, this class has been largely ignored by those who wield state power. Slums, the argument goes, exist outside the world of social security and healthcare; they are not provided with basic infrastructural services, such as running water, roads, and sewage systems; and they stand outside of the rule of law, since much of their land tenure is illegal and very often states do not invest the funds necessary to police them. Consequently, slum dwellers must find other ways to get these basic needs. As Žižek explains, "We are thus witnessing the fast growth of the population outside state control, living in conditions half outside the law, in terrible need of the minimal forms of self-organization."⁵ The long-term political consequences of leaving this vast army of informal laborers without adequate systems of social support and political representation could be far-reaching. Davis notes that in some places groups not affiliated with the state—e.g., Pentecostal Christians in South Africa, Islamists in Morocco—are already stepping into the breach and are starting to become the de facto governmental agencies of the slums, providing inhabitants with medical and legal services, paying for their funerals, and so on.⁶ The growing authority of such groups in slums around the world could have profound implications for the scope and nature of the informal proletariat's politics over the next several decades.

This chapter examines the "planet of slums" hypothesis through a case study of the changing dynamics of state authority in an Indonesian slum. The focus of my study is Cicadas, a densely populated neighborhood in the capital city of Bandung, West Java. In the first part of the chapter, I provide a brief description of Cicadas,

³ Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006).

⁴ Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Chicago, IL: Charles H. Kerr, 1907).

⁵ Slavoj Žižek, "Where to Look for a Revolutionary Potential?" See *Adbusters* 57 (March–April 2005).

⁶ Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums: Urban Involution and the Informal Proletariat," *New Left Review* 26 (March–April 2004): pp. 5–36.

followed by an historical overview of how the state has sought to intervene in, administer, and control slum life. This history shows that there has been a progressive deepening of bureaucratic state structures in urban life, and that slums have sometimes been a privileged site for the deployment of new governmental rationalities. However, the history also shows that state policy has often sought to shore up various kinds of supposedly preexisting forms of authority as a means to achieve social control on the cheap. These divergent strategies of rule have given rise to a peculiar situation whereby, on the one hand, slums have come to be thoroughly penetrated by quasi-bureaucratic state institutions and, on the other, just about everyone—including higher-ups in the bureaucratic apparatus itself—assumes that real local authority will be found in a relatively autonomous “informal” or “traditional” realm.

In the remainder of the chapter, I examine the changing dynamics of authority in this “informal” domain. While in other parts of Bandung such informal authority might lead one to examine the role of prominent religious or business leaders, in Cicadas, as in many Indonesian slums, the people who have emerged as respected and recognized informal leaders within the community have often been tough guys and criminals. This is reflected in the fact that people refer to the neighborhood as a *negara beling*, a term that could be loosely translated as “a rogues’ state” or simply as “a rough neighborhood.” The main rogues in Cicadas are a group of men variously referred to as *jeger*, *jago*, *jawara*, or *preman*. These men gained their status by virtue of their achievements in fighting and by demonstrating their capacity to mobilize a street-level following. Although locally famous, almost all of the Cicadas tough guys fall well under the radar of even the Bandung press. They operate at a level of urban politics that remains largely invisible to most observers.

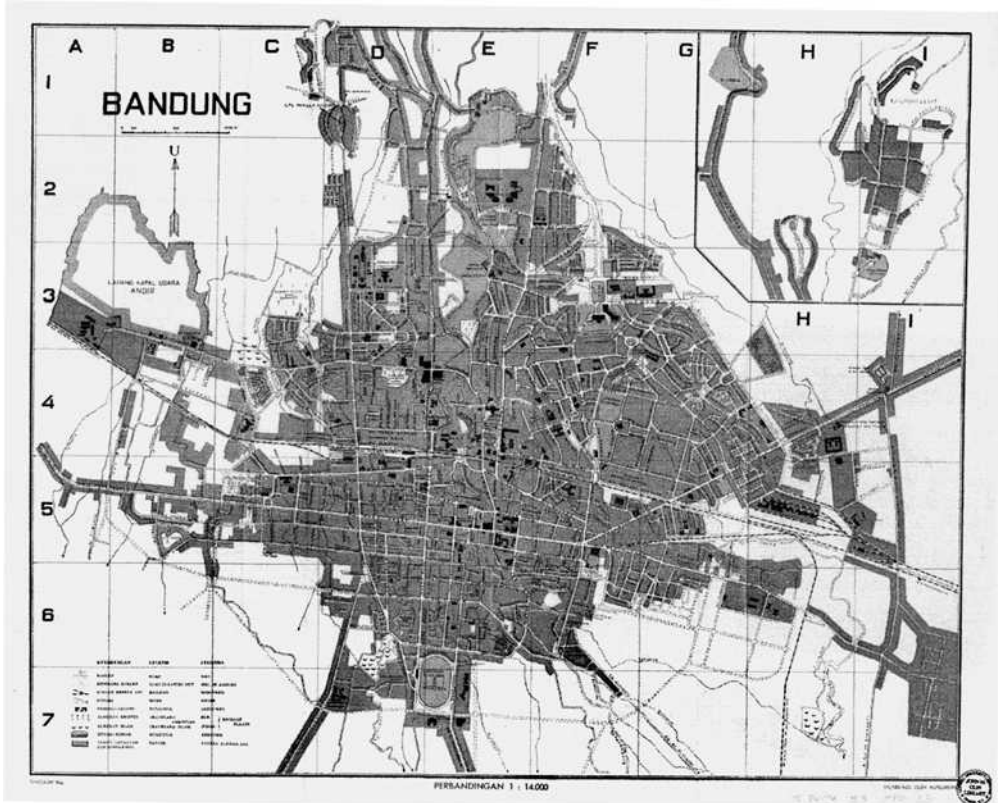
An examination of the biographies of some of these men reveals a great deal of variation in how these informal leaders have related to state authority over time. The biographies also reveal an important historical rupture in the kind of figures that achieve informal leadership roles in Cicadas. The tough-guy figures who dominated the neighborhood from the 1970s up until the 1990s are still present, but alongside them a different kind of leader has emerged—still informal, but less tough, more entrepreneurial, and more political. I suggest that the causes for the rise of these new leaders were primarily political and economic. *Reformasi* gave rise to some important changes in governance and politics, with real effects on Cicadas, and these coincided with a shift in the center of gravity of the Cicadas street economy. The confluence of these factors was what elevated the new leaders to prominence.

Having examined these biographies, I then return to address the core questions raised by the “planet of slums” hypothesis. Given the Cicadas case, does it make sense to think of slums as “outside state control” and “in dire need of self-organization”? Is the idea of a rogues’ state merely a myth, or is it suggestive of the real dynamics of authority in a slum like Cicadas? Who are the leaders of the informal proletariat, and what is the nature of their politics?

CICADAS: A BANDUNG SLUM

The area of Bandung widely known as “Cicadas” is located about three kilometers to the northeast of the city’s main square (*alun-alun*), near the intersection of Jalan Cikutra, Jalan Kiara Condong, and Jalan Jendral Ahmad Yani. The area does not pertain to any single administrative division; it is spread across portions of four

different subdistricts (Kecamatan Cibeunying Kidul, Batu Nunggal, Kiara Condong, and Cicadas) and several different urban villages (*kelurahan*). Our research focused on Kelurahan Cicadas and Cikutra, especially the latter.⁷ For most of the twentieth century the Cicadas Market was located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Jalan Cikutra and Jalan Jendral Ahmad Yani and acted as an anchor for the area. Although the market has now been moved across the street and a couple of hundred meters to the south, the area around where the old market used to stand is still generally known as Cicadas.



Map of Bandung, 1950. Cicadas is located in cell I-4 of the map
 Courtesy of the John M. Olin Library, Cornell University

The part of Cicadas where we focused our field research was that of RW04, located north of Yani Street and west of Cikutra Street. Both streets are extremely crowded. Yani Street is a paved road lined with shops selling clothes, furniture, electronics, and sporting goods, along with a pharmacy and a bank. Most of the shops are owned by Chinese-Indonesians. The street has a wide sidewalk that, along this stretch, is lined by street-vendor stalls made out of wood and covered by

⁷ The field research for this chapter was conducted in close collaboration with Eka (Ebo) Candra of the AKATIGA Foundation in Bandung. Ebo spent four months doing fieldwork in Cicadas prior to my arrival. I am extremely grateful to Ebo for his keen observations and ability to facilitate my ethnographic engagement from afar.

pancake), fire-grilled toast, fried and barbecued chicken, and fried vegetable snacks. Along this length of Cikutra Street there is a huge hospital complex set back from the road, and more pathways leading to Cicadas's interior *kampungs*. At the point where each of these pathways meets the street, semi-permanent structures have been erected out of wood and bamboo, where motorcycle taxis (*ojeg*) gather while they wait for passengers. Each of the structures has a sign or a banner that names the *ojeg* group that is based there. One, for example, is called CIP II, a name inspired by the American TV show "CHiPs" (California Highway Patrol, produced and first broadcast in the late 1970s and early 1980s). In a few places there are also spots where pedicab drivers park their vehicles, this being the other mode of wheeled transport into the interior of *kampungs*. The overall impression given by Cikutra Street is of a rather chaotic and dusty street market, like one might find in a frontier town.

Cicadas has a reputation for being one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the world. The whole area north of Yani Street and west of Cikutra Street is crisscrossed by pathways. Some of these are wide enough to be plied by pedicabs, some are just wide enough for motorcycles to drive along, and some are so narrow that if one walks along them and meets someone coming the other way, one person will have to turn back to find a place for the other to pass. Along all of these pathways are houses, some of which also house small businesses, such as food stalls, cigarette kiosks, tailor shops, shoemaker stands, mobile-phone counters, and video arcades. The houses vary greatly in terms of their size and the quality of their construction. One of our interviewees, Nana Berlit, lived in a privately owned house located on a wide pathway; the land occupied by the house was probably about 160 square meters and the house itself about 140 square meters, with ceramic floors, a high-quality tiled roof, and a fenced yard. Another of our interviewees, Sumpena, lived with his family along a very narrow pathway in a rented pavilion, kind of like a miniature row house, where the bottom story was a single room about four meters by two meters and the upper loft area was half that size. It appeared to have no bathroom or running water, but it was clean and its floors were ceramic. Other buildings in the *kampung* had dirt or cement floors.

STATES OF AUTHORITY IN CICADAS: BUREAUCRACY AND GOVERNMENTALITY

While I have been unable to track down any specific information about the history of Cicadas itself prior to the twentieth century, it is possible to surmise the general outlines of this history from what is known about the founding and development of the city of Bandung as a whole. Bandung city is located on a plateau in the highlands of West Java. During the eighteenth century, the Bandung plateau was an agricultural region with two main seats of government, one in the southwest and one in the northeast. These seats of government are still evident in the Bandung's cityscape in the form of two old *alun-aluns*, one in Dayeuh Kolot and the other in Ujung Berung. Cicadas was located between these centers of power and in this period would probably have consisted of small village hamlets located along the banks of the Cidurian River. The beginnings of the urbanization of the Bandung plateau can be traced to the construction of the Great Post Road, the first cross-Java highway, which was built in the early nineteenth century under instruction from Governor-General Daendels. With the construction of the Post Road, Daendels ordered that the seat of government located in the south be moved north to the edge

of the highway. Bandung's current main square has its origins in this move. While originally built for defensive purposes, this road became an important means of traffic between the fertile highland regions and the north coast. Cicadas was located just three kilometers east of Bandung's main square, toward Sumedang regency along this main artery.

Bandung remained a small administrative outpost and market town until the 1880s and then began to grow more rapidly. In 1833, the settlement had only about five thousand inhabitants, and by 1846 it had grown to some 31,000 people.⁹ By the time it was inaugurated as a municipality in 1906, the town had been connected to the coast via a train link and the population had grown to almost fifty thousand. About a kilometer away from Cicadas, a large railway yard and warehouse had been built, and around those developments new settlements emerged to house migrant workers from central and eastern Java. The city continued to grow up until and beyond World War II. In 1920 the municipality registered a population of 94,800, in 1930 it registered 166,815, and in 1940 it registered nearly 230,000 inhabitants.¹⁰ By that time the city was home to several government departments, numerous schools, a technical college, several industries, and many shops.

Despite its proximity to Bandung's center, Cicadas maintained a largely rural character until at least the 1930s. Maps of the city created during the 1920s and 1930s showing built-up areas are not entirely consistent with one another, but they all show that there was a concentration of settlements along the main roads and especially around the intersection of the Great Post Road and two other roads, one leading south to Dayeuh Kolot (Jalan Kiaracandong) and the other leading to the new suburbs in the north that were being built to house a burgeoning European population. One map published in 1940 shows three separate sets of hamlets with the name Tjitjadas located, respectively, northeast, northwest, and southeast of the main intersection. Some of the maps also show a few scattered unnamed hamlets situated along the river and among large swathes of green areas that were undoubtedly *sawah* (rice fields). These maps would seem to suggest that the area encompassing Cicadas was undergoing two main forms of urbanization in this period: "ribbon development,"¹¹ in which the strips along the main roads were being built up; and a broader transitional pattern of urbanization, one in which development was taking place through the intensification of village settlement and the gradual takeover of agricultural land. This latter kind of development, which has been thought to leave village social structures more or less intact, leads to the creation of what some scholars refer to as "*desa-kotas*," or village-cities.¹²

⁹ Willem Brand, *The Struggle for a Higher Standard of Living: The Problem of the Underdeveloped Countries* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1958), pp. 228–29.

¹⁰ Netherlands East Indies, "Native Population in West-Java," in *Volkstelling 1930*, vol. I (of eight) (Batavia: Departement van Landbouw, Nijverheid en Handel, 1933), pp. 122–23. The figure for 1940 is drawn from a loose-leaf table entitled "Djumlah Banjaknya Penduduk pada Achir Descember dari Tiap2 Tahun," apparently prepared in 1954 for the Badan Perantjang Pembangunan Daerah (BAPPEMDA) Djawa Barat. The table has population figures for the city of Bandung for the period 1918–1953. I found it glued inside what had once been BAPPEMDA's copy of the summary of the 1930 census.

¹¹ Robert Chambers, *Rural Development: Putting the Last First* (New York, NY: Longman, 1983).

¹² Davis, "Planet of Slums," p. 4; T. G. McGee, "The Emergence of Desakota Regions in Asia: Expanding a Hypothesis," in *The Extended Metropolis: Settlement Transition in Asia*, ed. Northon Ginsburg, Bruce Koppell, and T. G. McGee (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991), pp. 3–25; Peter J. M. Nas and Welmoet Boender, "The Indonesian City in Urban Theory," in

The creation of *desa-kotas* on the edges of Bandung should not be seen as a natural outcome of urban development, for it was at least partly the result of colonial administrative policies. One of the central features of Dutch municipal policy was the idea that preexisting villages incorporated into the city as it expanded should retain their status as autonomous villages rather than be administered directly by the municipal government.¹³ In 1906, the municipality of Bandung had a total of seventeen legal enclaves for indigenous villages within the city limits; by 1942, it had a total of forty-three.¹⁴ The idea that villages were autonomous territorial, social, and political units was itself the product of a misapprehension about how rural Javanese society was organized, but it was a notion that informed colonial administrative practice in rural Java for much of the colonial period and became something of a self-fulfilling prophesy.¹⁵ The application of this principle to urban villages amplified and elaborated upon a process that was already evident in Indies cities, whereby different ethnic groups—Europeans, Chinese, and various *pribumi* (indigeneous or “native”) groups—were expected to settle in different camps, each of which was administered by one of its own. In Bandung, for instance, Europeans lived mostly in the northern suburbs, Chinese residents in a camp in the center of town, and *pribumis* mostly in the south of the city.¹⁶ Within the *pribumi* areas, in addition to incorporated *desa* (village) enclaves, there were also various camps where migrants from particular regions settled. Near Cicadas, for example, a Soerabaja camp and a Java camp housed people who had migrated to work in the state-run railway yards. Thus, while Bandung, at the end of the colonial period, was generally a city that followed the model of Furnivall’s “plural society,”¹⁷ a closer look at the *pribumi* sections of the city reveals that within these sections there was a further division into *kampung* enclaves, sometimes based on ethnicity, sometimes based on migrants’ place of origin, and sometimes based on the presence of a preexisting “village.”¹⁸

The Indonesian Town Revisited, ed. Peter J. M. Nas (Münster and Singapore: Lit Verlag, 2002), pp. 3–16.

¹³ Gustaaf Reerink, “Behind the Landmarks of a Metropolitan City: The History of Kampung Formation in Bandung,” in a draft paper presented at the 2006 KITLV conference in Leiden, “The Decolonisation of the Indonesian City (1930–1960) in Comparative (Asian and African) Perspective,” pp. 4–6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁵ Jan Breman, *Control of Land and Labour in Colonial Java: A Case Study of Agrarian Crisis and Reform in the Region of Cirebon during the First Decades of the 20th Century* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1983).

¹⁶ From 1926, in order to mitigate the concentration of landholdings in European hands, Europeans were prohibited from buying land in the south of the city. This policy served to increase the segregation that was already evident between north and south. See Reerink, “Behind the Landmarks of a Metropolitan City,” p. 4. At the same time, such segregation was never complete. In the north, there remained village enclaves, and some Europeans (especially poorer ones) also resided in the center of town and the south. For an analysis of why such ethnic mixing often went unacknowledged in Indies towns, see Heather Sutherland, “Ethnicity, Wealth, and Power in Colonial Makassar: A Historiographical Reconsideration,” in *The Indonesian City: Studies in Urban Development and Planning*, ed. Peter J. M. Nas (Dordrecht: Foris, 1986), pp. 37–55.

¹⁷ J. S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944), p. 446.

¹⁸ According to the census of 1930, 42.93 percent of the *pribumi* population in Bandung had been born there while 14.4 percent had been born outside western Java, with the remainder being migrants from other parts of western Java. See Brand, *The Struggle for a Higher Standard*

Direct municipal involvement in the administration of *pribumi's kampung* life was surprisingly minimal prior to the Japanese occupation. Village enclaves within the city and in the *desa-kota* regions outside the municipality were under the authority of a *lurah* (village head), who was assisted by a *jurutulis* (secretary), *lebe* (religious official), *kolot politie* (police agent), and *kepala selokan* (head of irrigation), and by heads of individual *kampungs*.¹⁹ These officials, who answered ultimately to the *bupati* (indigenous chief of the district), administered *kampungs* on a day-to-day basis.

There were some efforts on the part of the colonial government to bring the city and its *kampungs* under more direct bureaucratic rule. One realm where such efforts were evident was that of policing. The early twentieth century was a period when government officials were deeply concerned about crime levels and there were several attempts to modernize police departments.²⁰ Bandung, along with Batavia, Semarang, and Surabaya, was one of the few towns in the Indies to have its own modern police force. The force had a main headquarters, city-section headquarters, and a number of guard posts located at various points around the city. At the city headquarters, specialized divisions were set up for investigations, public surveillance, administration, and traffic policing. New technologies were employed that might be particularly useful for social control in urban areas, such as fingerprinting and photographic identification. Routine street patrols were conducted from the police posts, and these were overseen by agents from the sectional and city headquarters, who regularly inspected the posts to make sure patrols were taking place on schedule. In Bandung, this force answered to the assistant resident, and its upper echelon consisted almost entirely of Europeans. However, even this new system of policing did not ultimately penetrate very deeply into *pribumi kampungs*. The force was deployed primarily in European sections of the city, and patrols occurred almost exclusively along the main roads. While the advent of regular uniformed patrols did give the police greater visibility, *pribumi* areas continued to be policed by village agents whose main responsibilities were administering the local night watch and maintaining the *gardu* posts, where members of the night watch gathered. The agents answered to the village head rather than to the police bureaucracy. Thus, the modern police force only penetrated into the *pribumi* sections of the city as far as the main roads.²¹

Where the municipal government did involve itself deeply in *kampung* life was in the domain of health and hygiene. In the nineteenth century the colonial government had started to work on developing methods for controlling the spread of disease

of Living, p. 268. Some 73.65 percent of the city's *pribumis* were Sundanese and 21.11 percent were Javanese. See Brand, *The Struggle for a Higher Standard of Living*, p. 259.

¹⁹ Gemeente Bandoeng, *Verslag Van Den Toestand Der Gemeente Bandoeng over De Jaren 1906/1918* (Bandoeng: N.V. Boekhandel Visser, 1919), p. 80.

²⁰ On the organization of city policing in the early twentieth century, see M. Oudang, *Perkembangan Kepolisian Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Mahabarata, 1952), pp. 12–14; Marieke Bloembergen, "Between Public Safety and Political Control: Modern Colonial Policing in Surabaya (1911–1919)," a paper presented at the first international conference on urban history, Surabaya, Indonesia (2004); and Marieke Bloembergen, "The Dirty Work of Empire: Modern Policing and Public Order in Surabaya, 1911–1919," *Indonesia* 83 (April 2007): 119–50.

²¹ Frederick noted a similar phenomenon in Surabaya, where old people reported that the police just patrolled the asphalt around neighborhoods; residents thought of the police as a foreign presence. See William Hayward Frederick, "Indonesian Urban Society in Transition: Surabaya, 1926–1946" (PhD dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1978), cited in Bloembergen, "Between Public Safety and Political Control," p. 14.

through vaccination, which in practical terms meant trying to vaccinate every last individual in a region. Up until then, it had never been necessary for the colonial state to identify and register individuals and to envision the population as a finite set of unique but comparable individuals (not even, for example, for the purposes of taxation and governance). But as scientists began to show how diseases spread, and how individuals' everyday habits and living conditions affected the spread of disease, the colonial elite began to take more and more of an interest in trying to keep track of how individual members of the population lived and how they died, and then to make interventions to "improve" the welfare and health of the population as a whole.²²

The discourse on hygiene had its origins in Europe, where it focused on the problems of poverty, dirt, and disease in the slums of industrial cities. When public-health issues were transported to the Indies context, city slums remained an object of concern, but there was less of a focus on the problems of industrialization and more on the problems associated with the habits and lifestyles of different racial groups, and with the health risks of living in a tropical climate. It was within the context of the discourse on hygiene that the city population as a whole, and the native *kampung*s in particular, became objects of colonial interest. It is notable in this regard that the first detailed accounts of *kampung* life in Javanese cities were those that appeared in the context of hygiene reports. Virtually all the instruments that we now rely on for knowing the city and its inhabitants—e.g., maps, census and statistical data, photographs—were first employed in the big cities of Java for the purposes of gathering data on health and hygiene. In the domain of hygiene, such data collection provided a scientific and evidentiary basis for justifying direct interventions by the colonial state in *kampung* life. As Joost Coté has shown, the discourse on hygiene asserted that resident Europeans' health and welfare were ultimately dependent on overcoming problems of sanitation and disease in *pribumi kampung*s.²³ By playing on Europeans' fears for their own well-being, the discourse allowed urban elites, through their largely unfettered control of municipal governments, to assert an expansive, interventionist, and direct authority over the *pribumi* sections of cities.²⁴ Whereas in the realm of political authority the central government made it clear that municipal governments "were not allowed to concern themselves with the *kampung* since that was seen as an intervention in the internal affairs of these 'Indonesian authorities,' [and thus] forbidden by law,"²⁵ such was not the case with hygiene. Indeed, after a series of reports about the poor state of sanitation in urban slums and the risks this presented to the health of the entire city population, it had become commonplace, by 1920, for central-government officials to tour a "bad *kampung*" whenever they made a visit to a town.²⁶

²² Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

²³ Joost Coté, "Towards an Architecture of Association: J. F. Tillema, Semarang and the Discourse on the Colonial 'Slum,'" in *The Indonesian Town Revisited*, pp. 319–47.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

²⁵ Erica Bogaers and Peter de Ruijter, "Ir. Karsten and Indonesian Town Planning, 1915–1940," in *The Indonesian City*, pp. 71–88.

²⁶ W. F. Wertheim, et al., "Foreword," in *The Indonesian Town: Studies in Urban Sociology*, ed. W. F. Wertheim et al. (The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve, 1958), pp. v–xvii.

Bandung represented something of a special case in the discourse on hygiene, as its highland climate was more temperate and thought to be healthier than other towns and cities on Java. As one hygiene official put it, “the worst *kampung* conditions in Bandung were like paradise compared to the coastal towns.”²⁷ However, these conditions did not mean that the city government refrained from interventions to improve hygiene. Quite the contrary, in fact—the city’s elite wanted to turn Bandung into a prototype for what a modern tropical city could be. Making the city a beacon of cleanliness, orderliness, and healthfulness was one the main ways the municipal authorities sought to do this. Starting in 1920, the municipality began keeping a population register of the births and deaths of all inhabitants of the city, including “Natives” and “Chinese.” According to Brand, it was the only city in the Indies to do so (most kept such information only on Europeans).²⁸ The municipal government also introduced a number of programs and ordinances aimed at improving hygiene conditions in the city. These included “*kampung* improvement” projects aimed at redesigning *kampungs* and dwellings to make them more hygienic and less susceptible to rat infestations; creating municipally regulated markets so as to eliminate street vending; introducing a waste-management system; opening new hospitals and care facilities; supervising and relocating cemeteries; and regulating slaughterhouses and food-production facilities.²⁹ It is notable that all these projects were heavily oriented toward material infrastructure improvements rather than toward social welfare and economic support. It is also notable that when these efforts were focused on non-European parts of the city, as in the *kampung* improvement program, they took the form of a kind of retroactive urban planning. Such planning sought to reconfigure existing practices and environments to meet a new ideal of urban order and cleanliness rather than to establish a whole new living environment from scratch. The reason for this may have been that those who designed the programs had a lingering sense that “native” domains of urban life should remain more or less autonomous and that therefore they should not be eliminated or displaced, but simply “improved.”

In Cicadas, the two main remaining landmarks of the colonial period, other than the Great Post Road itself, are testimony to the importance of hygiene in transforming *kampung* life during the late-colonial period. One is the Saint Yusuf hospital, which was originally established by a Dutch pastor as a clinic for treating tuberculosis and soon grew into a full-fledged hospital.³⁰ The other is the building that used to house the Cicadas market. This market, like other municipal markets in Bandung, was created as a means to centralize local commercial activity, subject the premises and trade to hygiene regulations, and ensure that the transactions were taxed.

Patterns of political authority in the *kampungs* of Bandung during the 1950s and 1960s do not appear to have changed very much from what they were before the revolution. From an administrative perspective, the main change was a deepening of bureaucratic authority through the creation of two additional layers of quasi-state officialdom (as described below) beneath that of the *lurah*: the head of the Roekoen

²⁷ Soetoto, cited in Brand, *The Struggle for a Higher Standard of Living*, p. 260.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 227.

²⁹ Anonymous, *Bandoeng En De Hygiène* (Bandoeng: Vorkink, 1928).

³⁰ Yuli, “RS Santo Yusuf, Tetap Berorientasi Sosial,” at <http://pdpersi.co.id/?show=dedaigne&kode=411&tbl=kilasrs>, December 19, 2000; accessed on October 1, 2007.

Kampoeng (RK, Village Association) and the head of the Roekoen Tetangga (RT, Neighborhood Association). This system was established during the Japanese Occupation and was modeled on the Japanese Tonari Gumi system, in which the supposed solidarity of small village communities was meant to provide social support and mobilization in the time of war against China.³¹ As applied in Indonesia, the RTs consisted of territorial groups of ten to twenty households that were under the authority of a head appointed by the members of the RT themselves. RKs consisted of a collection of several RTs and thus constituted a larger subsection of the village. Both groups were meant to hold monthly meetings of their members. According to Niessen, during the period of the Occupation, the RTs mainly functioned as a means for the state to mobilize people in cleaning operations and welfare activities, and to disseminate propaganda:

People who lived in the cities during the Japanese Occupation have reported about small offices of Ketoea Roekoen Tetangga that were built in every neighbourhood. From loudspeakers placed on top of these buildings music and announcements could be heard all day long.³²

The RK/RT system remained in place during the 1950s and the 1960s, but the actual RKs and RTs appear to have reverted to a more routine form of administrative activity. This is evident from Ismail's late-1950s ethnographic study of Gang Warungmuntjang, a *kampung* in west Bandung.³³ (This *kampung* would probably have been comparable to Cicadas since it, too, was located on the edge of the city along the Post Road, but in the opposite direction from the main square.) As Ismail describes it, the functions of the RT head in this period were various: he maintained records of births and deaths in the *kampung* as well as tracking the movement of people to and from the *kampung*; he provided official documentation for marriages, identity cards (*kartu tanda penduduk*, KTP), and burials, for which he received some small payments; and he mediated some disputes.³⁴ He was also a member of the so-called Badan Keamanan Desa (Village Security Unit), which was under the authority of the *lurah* and was responsible for maintaining local security, working with the police to catch criminals, and performing night-watch duties. Under this system, RT heads collected a small monthly "ronda" fee (*uang ronda*; literally, neighborhood fee) from residents in their respective wards.

An interesting feature of Ismail's account is that he makes it clear that the RT head of Gang Warungmuntjang was not necessarily the most important figure of authority in the *kampung*. Although the RT head was respected for his religiosity and experience, he was a person from the lower classes and did not have much actual clout. When there were problems in the *kampung* that he could not handle, he would

³¹ Information on the origins and development of the RK/RT system during the occupation is drawn from Nicole Niessen, "Indonesian Municipalities under Japanese Rules," in *Issues in Urban Development: Case Studies from Indonesia*, ed. Peter J. M. Nas (Leiden: Research School CNWS, 1995), pp. 115–31.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³³ Ismail, "Masjarakat Gang Warungmuntjang: Sebuah Gambaran Masjarakat R.T.3. Gang Warungmuntjang R.K. XV Situ Aksan, Desa Andri Kewedanan Bodonegara, Kotapradja Bandung," (Bachelor of Arts thesis, University of Padjadjaran, August 1960). To my knowledge, this is the earliest example of an urban ethnography of a Bandung *kampung*.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 51–54.

appeal to one of two people. The first would be a military man who could be counted on to deal with tough security problems, especially those involving weapons. The second would be a former policeman who was a skillful orator (*pandai bicara*) and had a reputation for possessing magical powers. As will be seen below, it was precisely these kinds of persons who would emerge as key figures within the informal authority structure in Cicadas in subsequent decades.

CICADAS: NEGARA BELING

In Cicadas, the idea that the slum could be a domain that stands outside the limits of modern state authority is expressed in the notion that Cicadas is a *negara beling*.

The Indonesian term "*beling*" literally means "shard of broken glass."³⁵ The term "*negara*" is the Indonesian term most frequently used to translate the English word "state," but in this context "*negara*" is not synonymous with the term "state" as most English speakers understand it today. As Geertz noted in his analysis of nineteenth-century Bali, the term "*negara*" occupies a rather different semantic field than does "state."³⁶ In olden times, a town was defined by its position at the center of the realm and was itself centered around a palace, which was the seat of royal authority. In Bali, the term "*negara*" (a Sanskrit loan word that appears in many languages in the region) referred to all those things at once: palace, town, and realm. In nineteenth-century Bandung, this general understanding of *negara* was also evident, although in a rather more mundane form. The first known map of Bandung, dating back to the 1840s, refers to the then-small town as "Negorij Bandoeng" (*negorij* and *negeri* are words closely related to *negara*).³⁷ However, in this context "*negorij*" signified realm in only a weak sense; moreover, Bandung had no royal palace as such. Off the main square there was a home for the resident (the highest European official in the region) and a residence for the *bupati*. Although the *bupati* was drawn from the indigenous aristocracy, or *menak*, he did not enjoy anything like the kind of spiritual and charismatic power associated with Balinese kings. Bandung was certainly a seat of state authority, but the authority was deeply dualistic and its potency rather limited.

The modern use of "*negara*" in reference to Cicadas is interesting partly because it does not refer to the city as a whole but just to a neighborhood. In the Balinese case described by Geertz, the *negara* was defined in opposition to village (*desa*), since although villages may have been part of the realm, they were the domains of commoners. Nowadays the village is not usually contrasted with state, but with city (*kota*). It is not entirely clear what the *negara* is set against in a semantic sense. In its common usage, the best candidates are probably society (*masyarakat*) and nation (*bangsa*). As in much recent social science, the idea of "state" often appears alongside "nation" (i.e., the nation-state) to indicate the distinct but conjoined aspects of a national society and its government. However, in the case of *negara beling*, this kind

³⁵ Some people say that Cicadas is called a *negara beling* because it houses so many *tukang beling*, people who collect broken glass and resell it (in the popular imagination, such people are often associated with illegal activities and the underworld). Others say it is because the area is dangerous, like broken glass. Both folk etymologies emphasize the criminal aspect of the neighborhood.

³⁶ Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theater State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980).

³⁷ Haryoto Kunto, *Wajah Bandoeng Tempo Doeloe* (Bandung: Granesia, 1984).

of association is not the relevant one. What the “*negara*” in *negara beling* brings to mind is not the society or nation, but the competing powers of other *negaras*, or, in this case, other neighborhoods. Insofar as we also understand it to be a rogues’ state, it also brings to mind the capital-N *Negara*: the modern Indonesian state whose supposed lack of authority in Cicadas makes the neighborhood appear as something of a state unto itself. Rather than the limits of state authority being imagined relative to “society,” they are imagined relative to another state—an outlaw state that exists within the territory of the modern state.

The idea of *negara beling* draws attention to an image of local authority that has been around in western Java for some time: a realm that takes shape around the leadership of a charismatic tough. As noted earlier, there are many names for such toughs, including *jago*, *jeger*, *jawara*, and *preman*. Writing about Bandung during the revolutionary period, John Smail describes what kind of power these figures had and the kind of social milieu that tended to produce them:

Djago literally means “fighting cock” and this expressive term conveys the essence of the type: he is boastful and pugnacious and carries a knife. The urban *djago*, particularly common in Djakarta, is a strong-arm man of a type familiar in the West and is not especially interesting. But cities are a comparatively recent phenomenon in Indonesia and the urban *djago* is historically a variation of a much more ancient rural type. [...]

[This type] is no more a simple rural criminal than the classical European bandit. The *djago* band is an accepted, though deviant, social institution; it has its justificatory myths and a collective mystique and is headed by a leader marked by strong charisma, though it is only parochial in scope. The individual *djago* characteristically carried an amulet (*djimat*) which usually converts invulnerability on him. He is often an adept at *pentjat*, a form of body control which, like related forms in the same East Asian family, such as jiu-jitsu in Japan and “boxing” in China, involves a great deal more than simple exercise or physical prowess.³⁸

According to Ian Wilson, these kinds of figures have often emerged as leaders when there was a breakdown in law and order.³⁹ At the end of Dutch rule, for instance, the assistant resident of Serang, D. H. Meyer, referred to large groups of *jawara* that had formed “a state within a state and paralyzed the village and local administration.”⁴⁰ Smail,⁴¹ writing about the revolutionary struggles in Bandung that followed the defeat of Japan in World War II, described how the vacuum of state power in the city after Japan’s surrender was quickly filled by the emergence of “*jago* republics” in Bandung’s *kampungs*. These miniature zones of autonomy and sovereignty provided local inhabitants with some degree of protection from other

³⁸ John R. W. Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1945–1946: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1964), p. 88.

³⁹ Ian Douglas Wilson, “The Politics of Inner Power: The Practice of *Pencak Silat* in West Java,” PhD dissertation, Murdoch University, 2004, p. 12.

⁴⁰ D. H. Meyer, “Over Het Bendewezen Op Java,” *Indonesië* 3,2 (September 1949): 180, cited in M. C. Williams, *Communism, Religion, and Revolt in Banten* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1990), p. 281.

⁴¹ Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1945–1946*, p. 124.

jago republics and from the interventions of both the Japanese and Allied powers. In some cases, where the zone of sovereignty included warehouses, shops, factories, or markets, they also provided tough guys with control over valuable economic goods and resources. In some such *jago* republics, Smail notes, the criminal element often got the upper hand over the political element, as looting and scavenging became ends in themselves rather than means to pursue the revolutionary struggle.⁴² In these cases, such *jago* republics appear to approach what Derrida describes as “voyoocracy”: a regime consisting of an organized network of rascals, ruffians, thugs, and so on, which represents “a sort of competing power, a challenge to the power of the state, a criminal and transgressing sovereignty, [...] a counter-sovereignty.”⁴³

In many respects, urban slum communities are the social spaces par excellence of voyoocracy. As Mike Davis points out, the first published definition of “slum,” from the year 1812, describes it as being synonymous with “racket” and “criminal trade.”⁴⁴ It was only later that it came to refer to a more general setting of poor housing, overcrowding, poverty, and vice.

In Ismail’s account and in the accounts of Bandung’s *jegers*, one can get a sense of how the *negara beling* mythology played out in everyday *kampung* life in those years. Ismail describes a scene in which teenage boys hang out in the alleyway each night, playing their guitars and dreaming of the kind of romantic lives they were seeing in the movies.⁴⁵ Other than that, the boys do not do much at all. I have heard a number of older *jeger*, all film buffs themselves, describe this period nostalgically in just those terms. In fact, some explain that they got into gang life or into crime precisely because they wanted to be like the cowboys they saw in the movies. This was a time when movies were all the rage in Bandung. In Cicadas, there were regular showings of movies in an outdoor cinema located in a nearby park (Taman Hiburan).⁴⁶ Cinemas—both of the outdoor type and of the more fancy type located in the center of town—were one of the first places where *jegers* made their appearance in the public sphere, acting as *calo* (agents or scalpers) for tickets to shows, and sometimes demanding money outright from patrons.⁴⁷

In Bandung, there was a powerful, mutual influence between cinema-going culture and *jeger* culture that lasted at least until the 1970s. The main alternative term for *jeger*, one that tough guys use to describe what they themselves were like in the old days, is *koboi* (cowboy). The fact that they use this term—rather than *jeger*—to describe themselves suggests that it is closer to their fantasy of what their position was: that of a tough guy with a gang of loyal buddies. A more urban version of this self-image, also from Hollywood, can be seen in the photos such men have kept of themselves from their youths. Photos collected of men from Cicadas dating back to the early 1970s show carefully cultivated poses that are reminiscent of promotional

⁴² Ibid., p. 89.

⁴³ Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, p. 68.

⁴⁴ Davis, “Planet of Slums: Urban Involution and the Informal Proletariat,” p. 12.

⁴⁵ Ismail, “Masjaraikat Gang Warungmuntjang,” p. 14.

⁴⁶ These cinemas are known as “*misbar*.” The joke about this name is that it is an acronym for “*gerimis sedikit bubar*” (it drizzles a little bit and people scatter).

⁴⁷ This was true not just in Bandung but in other cities, too. An example from Jakarta can be found in Jérôme Tadé, “The Hidden Territories of Jakarta,” in *The Indonesian Town Revisited*, pp. 402–23.

shots (which were displayed at cinemas and circulated widely in Bandung from at least the 1950s) for urban tough-guy films like *On the Waterfront* and *West Side Story*. Some tough guys from Bandung even went on to become either the subject of gangster films or actors in such films. The most well-known example of the former in Bandung is Mat Peci, a gangster who used to hang out in Cicadas and eventually went on to become known for daring robberies.⁴⁸ Eventually he killed a policeman in Bandung and was himself tracked down and killed, together with his henchmen. After his death, Mat Peci became the subject of a popular film, shot in Bandung, with Rahmat Hidayat in the leading role.⁴⁹

INFORMAL LEADERS IN CICADAS

The extension of state administrative structures and governmental regimes into Bandung's *kampung*s continued during the New Order. So, too, has the sense that the state is unable adequately to project its authority through these formal mechanisms alone. Nowhere is this more evident than in the practices and perceptions of low-echelon state officials, who are responsible for governing local areas on an everyday basis. In my research during the mid-1990s on precinct-level policing in Bandung, the limits of formal bureaucratic authority were quite striking. Despite the New Order government's well-deserved reputation as an authoritarian, militaristic, and repressive regime, when it came to the policing of city streets and neighborhoods, the state was much lighter on the ground than one might have expected. Much of the day-to-day work of policing was conducted not by the police at all but by civilian organizations, gangs, and private businesses. The police themselves remained largely confined to the big streets, just as they had been during the colonial period. The limits of direct police authority were evident also in the *perception*, frequently expressed by precinct-level police officers I talked to, that officials could only get anything done if they worked together with local "authorities" from within their jurisdictions. To describe these potential collaborators, the police used the term "*tokoh-tokoh*" or the English term "informal leaders." (Sometimes they inadvertently used the term "informant leaders," which provides an indication of the kind of relationship they desired with their collaborators.) These were the first people the police would turn to when they needed to get witness testimony, catch criminals, provide protection to local businesses, prevent protests, or gather intelligence.⁵⁰ Such leaders had a reputation for being plugged into local affairs and for being capable of resolving conflicts and imposing order on their communities. They included religious teachers (*kyai*), neighborhood elders, youth-group leaders, and local toughs. Such people might move in and out of formal positions of state power, but their authority derived at least in part from their ability to command the respect—and sometimes fear—of local residents.

⁴⁸ Information about Mat Peci and Rahmat Hidayat is taken from an interview with Sumpena on February 14, 2006.

⁴⁹ *Mat Peci Pembunuh Berdarah Dingin*. Interestingly, Hidayat was himself a figure in the gang world in Bandung.

⁵⁰ While this is undoubtedly true for police work anywhere, the situation in Bandung was extreme in this regard. For example, there were many neighborhoods where the police would not venture, even when searching for a suspect, without first seeking approval and support from informal leaders at the local level.

In the area of Cicadas, local district authorities were also very knowledgeable about the informal leaders in the slum. In the early phase of our research, Ebo went to the Cikutra district office to determine whether it would be a suitable site for research. At the office he had a chance to sit down and chat with Pak Fachtudin, the secretary to the district head, who proceeded to provide a good overview of patterns of street-level authority in the portion of Cicadas where this research was focused:

Pak Fachtudin explained that there are organizations for football and for arts in that area. In fact, there is a *dangdut* music organization that is often invited to perform at wedding celebrations. According to Fachtudin, each RT has its own *ronda*, administered and paid for by residents. In the area of Asep Berlian street, there are several *tokoh-tokoh*, like Pak Nana, Pak Dudung, and Ujang Ompong. Most of them are from Garut. In the area of Toko Timur [a shop], there is a gathering of vegetable vendors. He says that people “don’t try anything” (*jangan macem-macem*) with them [the vendors]. Most of them are experts in martial arts (*silat*). In the old days there were places to train in the martial arts, like Gadjah Putih [and] Salaka Domas. In that area there are also other organizations, like street vendors (PKL, *pedagang kaki lima*), Posyandu, [and] PKK (Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, Family Welfare Movement). When talking about Pak Dudung, Pak Fachtudin explained that he was among the “old cowboys” (*koboi kolo*); [Dudung] was never a leader of the area but was held in high respect (*disegani*). Pak Dudung often came to the district office, and when he spoke his voice was aggressive (*keras*), using [cuss words like] “stupid dog” (*anjing goblog*). Fachtudin explained that the area of Asep Berlian is indeed famous for its *jawara* and *jeger*. Those who come face to face with them will back down.⁵¹

While Pak Fachtudin would undoubtedly have been able to recite statistics about Cicadas and describe the organizational structure and membership of the district government, he clearly also had an eye for informal authority structures. In this respect, his manner of “seeing like a state”⁵² went beyond the modern bureaucratic logic of simplification and legibility, incorporating a more particularistic form of orally transmitted knowledge about the personal reputations of informal leaders at the local level. In relating his stories to Ebo, Fachtudin gave recognition to the importance of authority based on reputation and achievement. In doing so, he also talked up the reputations of particular informal leaders, thereby reinforcing their power.

Any attempt to venture into the world of reputations in order to trace their shifting dynamics is not without its hazards. The world of reputation is full of stories, and these stories are important, but often they are difficult to tie down with hard facts. The stories we heard in Cicadas frequently collapsed events into one another, since what mattered most to the storytellers was a string of powerful personal achievements (their own and others’), to the exclusion of all else. People who had once enjoyed renown but whose stars had faded were good at relating stories about their pasts, but we realized later that we had learned little about their situation in the present. Conversely, people who were at the height of their prowess

⁵¹ Eka Chandra, field notes, December 28, 2005.

⁵² James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

either did not take an interest in being interviewed or were completely focused on the dramas unfolding in the present moment, showing a complete lack of interest in talking about their pasts. Nonetheless, it was striking how stable reputations were. The list of *tokoh-tokoh* provided by Pak Fachtudin did not exhaust the list of personages in that part of Cicadas, but all the names he mentioned kept appearing again and again. Within the realm of street-level authority, there was only a limited group of powerful leaders, and everyone who was in the know seemed to agree on who they were and most even agreed on the main outline of their life stories. Nonetheless, in most cases there is no textual corroboration for the life stories relayed below. Despite the intensity of their local fame, almost nobody from the older generations of leaders even achieved enough prominence at the city level to warrant mention in the main Bandung newspaper, *Pikiran Rakyat*.⁵³

In what follows, I present the results of interviews with three generations of informal leaders. Nana Berlit, a man born in Cicadas in 1936 and who spent most of his life there, represents the first generation. Nana rose to prominence in the 1960s and probably enjoyed his greatest local authority during the 1970s and 1980s, when he headed a football club and a wrestling club with ties to the army and hired out tough-guy services to powerful businessmen. Two men, Sumpena and Suwarna, represent the next generation. Both were born in 1956 and got their start as Nana's underlings. At the time of their interviews in 2006, Sumpena was the secretary of a neighborhood association in Cicadas, and Suwarna was a parking attendant at the nearby Matahari department store. Both remained prominent, but it was clear that their period of greatest influence had passed. The third generation is actually of the same age group as Sumpena and Suwarna, but represents a new generation of leadership with a style quite distinct from the tough-guy model of the first two. Ujang Saepuddin and Eman Suherman are good examples of this third generation. Both rose to prominence in the late-1990s as a result of their work in organizing workers in Cicadas's informal sector, such as street vendors and motorcycle-taxi drivers. They have since become the leaders of the local branch of PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle).⁵⁴

NANA BERLIT

Nana Berlit was born in 1936 in the Santo Yusuf hospital in Cicadas. As a child, he attended school at the Santo Yusuf school. In the period prior to the war, his father was one of the three main landowners in Cicadas, along with Haji Sahroni and Asep Berlian, both of whom have streets named after them. According to Nana, his father was a powerful figure at that time.

[Among those who used to hang out at the Cicadas Market] there were *delman* [horse carriage] drivers, horseshoe smiths, and carriage-wheel mechanics. Each was exceptional in his own way. The *silat* [self-defense] teachers gathered together under my father's care. The Dutch police [*opas*] used to come by to

⁵³ A fairly exhaustive search of stories about crime, youth groups, and policing in the period from 1972 to the present yielded only one mention of a member of this older generation.

⁵⁴ Based on interviews conducted with Nana Berlit by Eka Chandra on March 17, 2007, and by the author on June 11, 2007. Direct quotes from this and subsequent interviews were translated from Sundanese to Indonesian by Eka Chandra and from Indonesian to English by the author.

check up on things [*mengontrol*] and they would ask, "How is the Cicadas area, secure?" And my father would say, "What is it that isn't safe?" So [the police] acknowledged his authority [*seگان*].

By the end of the war, however, Nana's father had lost almost all of his land. In the early 1950s, Nana began taking classes in jujitsu and judo. This was a time in Bandung when martial arts clubs were sprouting up in a number of areas, and some of these clubs had ties to prominent people in the army and the police. After the death of his father, Nana went to Magelang to train to become an army officer. However, he ran away because he found the training, which included hazing, to be too demeaning and, as a result, he struck a superior. After pulling some strings with a relative in the military police so as to avoid punishment, he did short stints in the navy and the police in other parts of the country before ending up as a civilian employee of a cavalry division based in Bandung. He worked there until his retirement.

During the 1970s he formed the Dollar Group, whose members included youths from around the Cicadas market. Nana Berlit described the origins of the Dollar Group as follows:

The beginnings of the Dollar Group were like this: sometimes there were troubles in the area and, if there was too much friction, *Bang!*, it would explode. So we formed the Dollar Group ... If there was a problem, people would come here to try to find a way to end it. Thank the Lord that the Dollar Group was not just a group of rioters, but was formed for the purposes of promoting arts and sports [such as football]. Thank the Lord that it was also partly able to calm down rioting, which served no purpose.⁵⁵ The perceptions of outsiders were that we were violent [brutal],⁵⁶ but it wasn't really like that. Nah, precisely because of its brutality this group was feared and respected.

The ambiguity in what Nana says in these last two sentences—about whether the group was indeed violent or whether its real aim was to prevent violence—is telling. Was the group really a group of rioters, or was it formed as a means to quell potential disturbances by disgruntled youth by providing them with a less violent and less politically volatile outlet for their frustrations?

⁵⁵ Nana Berlit is probably referring here to a large, anti-Chinese riot that took place in Bandung in 1973. Known as the August 5th Affair, this riot was triggered by rumors that a Chinese youth had beaten to death a pedicab driver after the youth's Volkswagen had been scratched by the pedicab in the street (the pedicab driver was not actually killed). In the ensuing riot, crowds of youths ransacked ethnic Chinese-owned shops, businesses, and homes throughout the city center. It was a huge riot, with some 1,520 houses, 4 factories, 130 cars, 175 motorcycles, and 111 bikes damaged or destroyed (*Pikiran Rakyat*, August 13, 1973). One of the areas that was hit hard by this rioting was Cicadas. While the government blamed remnants of the PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party) for the disturbances, newspaper reports at the time suggest that some of the ransacking was initiated by elements in West Java's Army Command, Siliwangi.

⁵⁶ The term "brutal" may be from the Dutch "brutaal," meaning fearless or offensively bold. In the Indonesian, it is often associated with adolescent behavior and carries the connotation of violence.



Rahwana. Courtesy of Maman Sport

In the case of the Dollar Group, Nana is cagey. But he is absolutely clear about another organization he helped to found sometime later, known as Rahwana. Rahwana was formed under orders from an army garrison to secure Cicadas and East Bandung. The other two co-founders were military men. It was one of a few organizations in Cicadas formed during the 1970s that sought to attract and organize youths involved with drugs and gangs. (Another was a gang of pickpockets formed by Nana's mystically inclined friend, Eman Suhada.) According to Nana, Rahwana was the entity that had the best relationships with people in the army and the police. It was centered on a martial arts school, which provided training, hosted tournaments, and put on performances. But the school was also a business that provided protection to local shops and factories, and, as its reputation grew, to clients in other parts of the city, too. It was lucrative work, but not all the profits went to Rahwana, since the group's partners (presumably in the army and the police) also had to get their share.

Nana was at pains to explain that in cases where there was trouble, it was not political:

The disturbances did not have a political character; at most they involved individuals who had a territorial conflict. [Sometimes] there were disturbances with a public character, like groups of people throwing things at shops, but it wasn't politicized. The people of Cicadas follow the way of cows. If someone sullies [*menggores*] Cicadas's name, people will go out *en masse* by truck, bringing whatever weapons they have, to launch an assault. But now, thank the Lord, it is safe here, as long as I'm still around. Once there was an Ambonese or Papuan guy who tried to plant his flag, and the kids from here stabbed him and left him

for dead. He got what was coming to him. This is Cicadas land [*lahan*] and anyone who tries to colonize it⁵⁷ will experience just what he did.

SUWARNA AND SUMPENA⁵⁸

Both Sumpena and Suwarna were among the kinds of youths that Nana brought into Rahwana and the Dollar Group. Suwarna grew up in Cicadas, right next door to Nana. Some of Suwarna's earliest memories were from the time of G 30 S PKI (September 30th Movement), in 1965, which he remembered as a period of great hardship. If you wanted to eat or to buy fuel to cook with, Suwarna explained, you had to get a card from the RT and then you had to line up. There was no rice, so people ate food made from dried corn. By the 1970s, Suwarna recalled, he was often getting into trouble. This was a time when numerous gangs emerged throughout the city, and youths would launch attacks and counter-attacks on one another. Suwarna was involved in a number of these battles, including one that pitted him against members of Angkatan Muda Siliwangi (Siliwangi Youth Forces), a youth organization and protection racket with close ties to West Java's military command. As a result of his fighting, Suwarna was captured by the police and held in confinement for two weeks. Upon his release, he spent time selling marijuana in the streets before taking over as one of the *jegers* who controlled the nearby Cicaheum bus terminal. He provided security at the terminal for nine years, during which time he studied a type of self-defense known as *mempo*. He also provided security for a number of businesses around Bandung, including a billiard hall, cinema, and bar. He would stay with each establishment for a year or two before being relocated to yet another business somewhere else, where he would be the unofficial leader.

I don't mean to be arrogant, but at each place I got located to, I made it safe. No matter how brutal it had been, it would become secure. Once Lambada was safe, I was moved to Sukajadi, where sometimes the kids who made trouble were from the nearby army complex. I said to them they could fight me one at a time, if they dared, or they must stop causing trouble. I told them, "Even if the person being asked for a payment [*jatah*] is Chinese, you still have to work for it, provide some sort of help. If you only make demands on people and they give you something, but you don't work for it, that means you are a *jeger*. I'm given money because I work for it." That's what I told them.

Suwarna's story about the advice he gave these army kids reflects his ambivalence about his profession. During the late 1970s, a number of gangs in Bandung and in other cities in Indonesia sought to turn their gangs and protection rackets into legitimate businesses providing "security services," and thereby to give legitimacy and public respectability to their activities. People like Suwarna, who grew up mostly in the streets and did not get much schooling, clearly desired such respectability. He wanted to have a job and not to be seen as a *jeger*. There may be other reasons, too, for his desire to distinguish himself from this category of person. During the Petrus campaign of the mid 1980s, in which paramilitary squads killed

⁵⁷ "To colonize it" means to take over the extortion rackets.

⁵⁸ This section is based on (a) interviews conducted with Suwarna by Eka Chandra on April 7, 2006, and by the author on June 11, 2006; and (b) interviews with Sumpena conducted by Eka Chandra on February 7 and 14, 2006.

large numbers of suspected *preman* and *jeger*, a number of people he knew were among those murdered. The campaign—which he referred to simply as the “mysterious time”—clearly left a strong impression on him, and he was thankful to have survived it. Furthermore, by the time we interviewed him in 2006, Suwarna had undergone something of a religious awakening. By his own account, he had remained “brutal” until 1999. In that year, he was asked by his boss to take up a new position as a parking attendant at the Matahari department store. He worked under a man called Pak Koswara. Pak Koswara had been brought in from a different department store to coordinate parking because the person in charge of parking at Matahari had been siphoning off money and the owner of Matahari wanted someone more reliable. Pak Koswara left a strong impression on Suwarna:

[Pak Koswara] wasn’t like other people who always want money and who take anything extra they can get. In fact, when he was offered extra, he would refuse it. I was surprised there could be a person like that, a good person who didn’t make trouble [... He said to me] “Pak Kos is rich, Pak Suwarna will also be rich.” I was shocked. “Rich in your heart.” And thank the Lord, he invited me to meet someone, but I had to put away my weapon [*clurit*] first. I would often bring my weapon to the parking post. And then I met an old man who showed me how to pray [*sholat*] [...] and I have received [his teachings] from 1999 until today.

It is not uncommon for Bandungers with backgrounds like Suwarna’s to find religion as they grow older. Suwarna’s case is a little more extreme than most, since he experienced it almost as a conversion, but it follows a recognizable pattern. The embrace of religion allows these men to leave fighting behind while maintaining the respect of those around them. For Suwarna, however, this transition did not entirely free him from the kind of fear he must have experienced throughout his life. During the interview he repeatedly expressed his anxiety that the group he had joined might be thought of as “an organization” or an “heretical sect” (*aliran sesat*) of Islam and that it might get him into trouble with the authorities.

Whereas Suwarna remained quite marginal relative to state power, Sumpena was drawn more closely into the machinations of the security state. The son of Maman Sport, a close friend and contemporary of Nana Berlit who had also been active in Rahwana, Sumpena became involved in drugs and gang life during the 1970s. Through school he got to know a number of people who would eventually emerge as locally famous toughs in the city. Eventually, his father arranged for him to go work as a “bulldog” (bodyguard, debt collector, and enforcer) for Fery, one of Bandung’s most well-known businessmen, who owned large quantities of real estate, shoe and garment factories, and who reputedly operated a city-wide illegal lottery network with ticket outlets in a number of locations, including in Cicadas. Fery hired people from Rahwana to secure his business interests and to protect him from a number of gangs who had it in for him. While working for Fery, Sumpena got caught up in a turf war between Fery and Tommy Winata, both of whom had powerful backers in the Army and the Police, and he was arrested. His arresting officer offered him the chance to work as an intelligence agent, so he took a one-year training course and then worked as a spy for police intelligence for several years, in Bandung and beyond.

Intel agents have underlings known as spies [*spion*]. They are the ones who give the first information. This information is then traced, followed-up upon, and only then do the police launch an operation [*penggerebegan*]. Spies are given an honorarium, so for example if the operation has a yield of one, the spy will be given as much as half.

While working for the Police, Sumpena tracked a number of people who then became targets of the Petrus campaign, including two men in Cicadas.⁵⁹ In return, he was given a salary and a monthly allotment of rice.

There used to be nobody here [in Cicadas] who knew I was an intelligence agent, but now there are some who know because I often talk. There are some who ask why I left, and I explain because I committed a grave sin [by spying, for being a snitch]. Now I really feel what it means to work in a job like that, without forgiveness. Allah can give forgiveness but humans cannot. But if I didn't follow orders it was me that would have been in trouble.

By the time this interview, Sumpena had retreated from the kind of life he used to lead. He had destroyed all his membership cards for youth organizations, of which there were many, and although he kept up on the latest rumours regarding city politics, he did not himself participate much in it. He spent his time doing his duties as Secretary for the RW while earning money on the side as a shoemaker, a valuable skill he had acquired while working for Fery.⁶⁰

UJANG OMPONG AND PAK EMAN

Ujang Ompong and Pak Eman, representing the third generation of informal leadership, were of the same age as Suwarna and Sumpena, but they had a noticeably different outlook and were much less interested in talking about the past. Both men were from the general vicinity of Cicadas, and both had made their livings as traders, Eman selling over-the-counter drugs on the street and Ujang minding a stall at the Cicadas market. Neither had achieved renown by virtue of his fighting prowess. Ujang had reportedly challenged Nana Berlit to a duel on one occasion, but had been given a thrashing. Neither man related any stories about gang involvement and crime.

As representatives of a new generation of local informal leaders, however, these men were very important. Ujang Ompong had for some fifteen years acted as the elected leader of an association of street vendors and former market vendors located along Jalan Ahmed Yani. This association had a fair amount of street power since its members had a reputation for challenging attempts by the city government to clean streets of vendors and had on some occasions been involved in riots directed against the public order police. When he was first elected, the group had only 20 members

⁵⁹ Although the Petrus campaign is usually said to have taken place in the mid-1980s, Petrus-like killings persisted long into the 1990s and may even continue today. It is likely that Sumpena is referring to Petrus-like killings that took place in the 1990s.

⁶⁰ Based on interviews conducted by Eka Chandra with Ujang (Ompong) Saepuddin, April 7, 2006; and by the author with Eman Suherman, June 11, 2006.

but by the early-2000s it had amalgamated with neighboring groups and had grown to have as many as 120 members.

Along with Eman, Ujang Ompong was also active during the early 2000s in establishing an association of motorcycle taxis along Ahmed Yani Street and Cikutra Street. Initially, Ujang had sought to organize the pedicab drivers. To do so, he called together all the pedicab business people and distributed membership cards to drivers free of charge. But the organization never worked very well. As a result, Ujang, together with some others, started to organize the motorcycle-taxi drivers, most of whom own their own motorcycles. This association—known as CIP II, as mentioned above—was much more successful. In just a few years it had grown to include some 140 members.

Both Ujang Ompong and Eman had a similar manner of talking about these organizations, whereby they focused in quite some detail on their economic underpinnings, while making general claims about their political power. Over coffee at his kiosk on the sidewalk, with other vendors listening in, Eman described how the street vendor organization functions. Its territory, he explained, was strictly defined, bounded by Cikutra Street to the east and Toko Timur to the west. This territory was then divided up into vending spots, each of which was occupied by a card-carrying association member. Membership cards varied in price from the equivalent of about US\$50 to US\$100 (five to ten million rupiah), and if the cards were re-sold, then the association coordinators would get a cut of the resale value. In addition to having to purchase their membership cards, vendors also had to pay a daily fee of about US fifty cents (five thousand rupiah) for each twelve-hour period they worked. A portion of these funds was to cover routine payments to the local police, the local army command, and the RW. Such payments were meant to ensure that vendors would not be evicted or be subject to extortion on an individual basis. (The *ojeg* organization functioned in an almost identical manner.)

Eman then jovially went on to describe to us how elements in the state apparatus (*aparatur*) had twice kidnapped him because they worried that Cicadas would “explode” during the *Reformasi* movement, and they expected him to prevent a riot from breaking out. He also described how the PDI-P had approached him about becoming a local leader of the party organization in Cicadas. Indeed, in the early 2000s, as Bandung’s economy began to recover from the financial crisis, both he and Ujang Ompong grew increasingly active in city politics. Ujang reportedly entered into a deal with a man seeking to organize street vendors across Bandung, Eceng Eno, who was active in PDI-P party politics. Both Ujang and Eman became local organizers of PDI-P in the Cicadas area, and in 2004 Ujang Ompong was elected head of RT01. Perhaps because of these maneuvers, the mayor of Bandung at the time, A. A. Tarmana, arranged for the street vendors’ association to receive 100 million rupiah (about US\$10,000), ostensibly to help them create a cooperative. In 2005, Eman used the association to mobilize Cicadas street vendors in a demonstration supporting the new mayor’s attempts to “revitalize” the Cicadas market, a move that vendors with stalls inside the market opposed, fearing that they would be displaced.⁶¹ The Cicadas street-vendor association, some members of which had been displaced from the market the last time it had been relocated,

⁶¹ “GPMC Demo Soal Pasar Cicadas,” *Detikinet*, August 18, 2005. See: www.detikinet.com/read/2005/08/18/075408/423978/131/gpmc-demo-soal-pasar-cicadas, accessed on February 17, 2009.

supported the revitalization because Eman had received a promise that their members would get space in the new market. Ujang also lobbied to ensure that another group he was involved with would get the contract to salvage all the steel from the existing market once it was demolished.

CONCLUSION

The planet-of-slums hypothesis presents an image of a growing informal proletariat left to its own devices in the burgeoning slums of cities in the developing world. This hypothesis, tinged with fear and revolutionary hope, raises the question of what will happen to the informal proletariat in the coming decades. Will it be enfranchised by nation-states seeking to extend citizenship rights to this urban underclass? Or will groups with radical ideologies step into the breach where nation-states have failed and capture the hearts, minds, and bellies of this lumpen class?

An examination of the history of state power and informal leadership in the Bandung slum of Cicadas raises serious questions about the underlying assumptions of the planet-of-slums hypothesis. While there can be no doubt that Cicadas is the site of work and residence for a significant and probably growing population of people working in the informal sector, the state has in fact been very active in shaping the forms of authority under which this informal proletariat lives. Broadly speaking, these forms of authority can be characterized first of all as a progressive, albeit gradual, deepening of bureaucratic power. This bureaucratization began in the late-colonial period and continues to this day. However, this bureaucratization has always lagged behind a desire on the part of the authorities—both colonial and postcolonial—to tame and control slum areas. Their own lack of faith in the effectiveness of the bureaucratic apparatus led successive city governments to develop two main strategies to exert control over urban slums. On the one hand, they sought to exert control through techniques of modern governmentality, as was evident in the campaigns to make slums more healthful and hygienic. On the other hand, they sought to rule the slums indirectly through the cultivation of informal slum leaders.

In Cicadas, public faith in the authority of informal leaders, many of whom were of a criminal type, gave rise to an idea that the slum existed as a state unto itself: a voyoucracy or *negara beling*, which was beyond the reach of formal state authority, just like the planet-of-slums hypothesis might suggest. Yet an examination of the biographies of several of Cicadas's *voyoux* presents us with a much more complicated picture of how this voyoucracy functions. From Nana and his underlings, Sumpena and Suwarna, we learned that the organized voyoucracy, in the form of Rahwana and its ilk, was far from being a spontaneous development. It was created under orders from the army as a means to suppress eruptions of social discontent and to allow the army and the police to indirectly "tax" the emergent capitalist class. At the same time, the voyoucracy served the interests of local capitalists by providing them with a means to protect businesses and enterprises in which the accumulation of capital was taking place. The story of political authority in Cicadas during the New Order was the story of the rise and eventual decline of a voyoucracy and little else. As the barely surviving remnants of the voyoucracy, Suwarna and Sumpena are indicative of its fate. Both left the life of the *voyoux* behind—Sumpena to become an informal laborer in the manufacturing industry, and Suwarna to work as a quiet parking-lot attendant seeking spiritual guidance from a charismatic sect that might be subject to state repression at any moment.

The new generation of informal leaders in Cicadas is no longer a *voyoucracy* of the sort typically expected to function in a *negara belang*. Their leadership does not depend on fighting skills, and they do not engage in much violence at all. Their authority derives not from their capacity to protect capital but from their capacity both to control and to organize the most politically volatile and publicly visible members of the informal proletariat: street workers. In marked contrast to what Davis describes for the slums of African cities, where charismatic religious leaders are increasingly important, what we observe in Bandung is the rise of people like Ujang Ompong and Eman Suherman, pragmatic and entrepreneurial political operators who broker and mediate relations between the state and the slum.⁶² In the context of a more open multiparty system, these leaders represent that which the political parties most desire: individuals who are able—or at least claim to be able—to mobilize swathes of the masses for political purposes. And to members of the informal proletariat, these leaders represent the prospect that a group of organized workers might be able to carve out a space for themselves that is free from the predations of government officials.⁶³

It is hard not to be curious about whether these leaders will end up representing their constituents or whether they will simply become stooges of a state increasingly focused on making the city safe for big capital. Putting this question aside, however, one can still note an important shift in the politics of informal leadership in this Indonesian slum. Whereas the earlier generation of leaders, in close alliance with the New Order state, built its authority on the basis of fear and violence, the current generation of leaders builds its authority almost exclusively on appeals to narrowly defined economic interests.

⁶² It is notable that Suwarna did seek support from a spiritual leader. In some neighborhoods in Bandung, there is evidence that charismatic religious leaders are increasingly important, but not so in Cicadas.

⁶³ The Janus face of these leaders may well be a function of the ambiguous character of the informal proletariat itself: part worker, part petty bourgeois.

MILK COFFEE AT 10 AM: ENCOUNTERING THE STATE THROUGH *PILKADA* IN NORTH SUMATRA

Deasy Simandjuntak

It's just like when you've got some coffee that's too black, which means it's too strong. What do you do? You integrate it with cream, you make it weak. But if you pour too much cream in it, you won't even know you ever had coffee. It used to be hot, it becomes cool. It used to be strong, it becomes weak. It used to wake you up, now it puts you to sleep.

—"Message to the Grass Roots," Malcolm X¹

For those observing the district head election (*Pilkada*) in the vicinity of Brastagi and Kabanjahe in North Sumatra, it would be hard to avoid a profound conversation with ordinary people on the subject of the "state," also readily equated with "government" (*pemerintah*) and "the elites" (*para elit*).

Indeed, the whole process was such a feast. During the campaign period, men saluting each other on the only main street in Brastagi would tell stories of individual district head (*bupati*) candidates, party leaders who supported them, so-called success teams, or the exploits of some *Tim Sukses* (political groups or clubs) they knew or had heard of.² Women on their way to the orange orchards would put down

¹ Malcolm X, *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements* (New York, NY: Pathfinder, 1992), p. 16. This excerpt is from a speech given by Malcolm X on November 10, 1963, in Detroit, Michigan. He used the milk-coffee metaphor to describe the weakening of the African-American movement in the United States due to excessive intermixing of white people and the state. In the present chapter, the quote could be taken as an allegory on the merging of two entities that had also been previously irreconcilable: the state and society.

² "Success teams" manage financial, administrative, and other necessities of a political campaign. In North Sumatra, success-team members are also "ushers," guaranteeing (or, rather, claiming to be able to guarantee) a certain number of votes from a certain village, or claiming to be able to deliver a crowd over which they have influence. A *Tim Sukses* has members ranging from rich and influential land-owning patrons (mostly good friends or close relatives of a candidate, who serve as backers and financiers) down to those "supporters" who loiter at campaign headquarters, doing errands in return for small banknotes.

their heavy fertilizer tubes to have a chat about the latest open rally they had attended.³ The conversations would start with commentaries about individual candidates and supporting party leaders: "His family used to live here, remember?"; "He may indeed be regarded as the uncle of so-and-so, right?"; "I know his father." The discussion might then develop into "harmless" talk about whose campaign was attracting bigger crowds, the whereabouts of ballot boxes, whether one needed to bring an identity card on election day, or whether one had been asked by a political party branch to act as a witness at the voting booth. Or else the talk might result in a rather thoughtful exchange of opinions about "the present government" (*pemerintahan sekarang ini*).

Indeed, such political discussions may turn into lengthy conversations, wherever or whenever they are initiated. More often than not, it seems, these chit-chats occur in a coffeehouse, or *kedai*, and invariably involve male chatterers, who drop by in the morning to sip glasses of milk coffee before turning to the day's activities.

Discussing an upcoming election may seem to be the most natural occurrence in countries familiar with liberal democracy. Yet for the little town of Brastagi, the idea that one may directly choose an individual, known or unknown, as the future local leader was entirely novel. Here a common person found himself or herself face-to-face with "the concern of the elites" (*urusan para elit*) and the "affairs of government" (*urusan pemerintah*). The common person could see up close and firsthand "the state" itself, as portrayed in the personalities, words, and conduct of the candidates.

KARO

The highlands of Karo, also known as Tana Karo (Karoland) and Kabupaten Karo (Karo District), lie within the secure surroundings of the Bukit Barisan mountain range of North Sumatra.⁴ To the west, the fertile land of Karo borders the province of Nangroe Aceh Darussalam, while to the east, north, and south lie North Sumatra's districts of Deli Serdang and Simalungun, Deli Serdang and Langkat, and Dairi, respectively. In 2005, the year of the *Pilkada*, Karo's population was 316,207, with the largest townships being the district capital, Kabanjahe (54,000), and Brastagi (38,257).⁵ There were 215,159 eligible voters for the *Pilkada*, of whom 35,372 were

³ Open rallies for all the candidates are held simultaneously in different villages, making it possible for people to choose which one to attend. For residents of Brastagi and Kabanjahe, attendance at faraway villages such as Tiga Binanga is almost impossible, due to inadequate public transportation. Only fanatic supporters or *Tim Sukses* members will attend every rally regardless of distance. Supporters from remote places are usually entitled to a small "transport remuneration" (*uang transport* or *uang bensin*) from the *Tim Sukses*.

⁴ The Karo district consists of thirteen subdistricts comprising 258 villages and locales. Tana Karo or Taneh Karo refers to the land of the Karo people, thus, if used as an ethnic category, the term includes areas that lie within other districts, such as Taneh Pinem, Tiga Lingga, and Gunung Tember of Dairi District; Selesa, Kuala, Salapian, and Bahorok (among others) in Langkat District; Lubuk Pakam, Bangun Purba, and Hamparan Perak (among others) in Deli Serdang District; Lau Sigala-gala and Simpang Simadam in Aceh Province; and the city of Binjai.

⁵ Badan Pusat Statistik Sumatra Utara (North Sumatra Government Statistic Center), "Jumlah Penduduk menurut Kabupaten/Kota Tahun 2006" (Population Data for 2006 by District/City), <http://sumut.bps.go.id/?kdbsek=18&pilih=vstasek>, accessed on February 26, 2009.

from Kabanjahe and 27,657 from Brastagi.⁶ Most Karo residents are farmers; oranges are the region's main agricultural product. Orange orchards are everywhere, even along the main roads between towns and villages. Sumatra is the main orange supplier for the whole country.

Most ethnic Karo are Protestant (54.8 percent), with GBKP (Gereja Batak Karo Protestant, Protestant Church of Batak Karo) the dominant church. A quarter of the population is Muslim (25.6 percent), while fewer are Catholic (17.8 percent), and fewer still are Buddhist or Hindu.⁷ Some Toba/Tapanuli Bataks live in towns and work as seasonal laborers (*aron*) in Karo-owned orange orchards. While also Protestant, Toba people go to their own church, HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestant, Congregation of Protestant Christian Batak). Chinese businesspersons have their shops along the main streets of Kabanjahe and Brastagi. Most Javanese and members of other ethnic groups maintain small vending stalls in the markets in both towns. Most of the non-Karo "others," especially the Chinese, understand the Karo language, even if they do not speak it. A native Karo friend proudly told me that some Chinese have been given Karo surnames and are considered relatives, because their fathers and fathers' fathers have been in Karo so long. Traditionally, Karo has a "three-legged" affine structure, to be elaborated below, in which an individual's ("ego's") wife's clan possesses a higher position in the *adat* compared to ego's own clan or the clan of ego's son-in-law.⁸ Aside from this hierarchy, Karo does not have a rigid aristocracy through which patterns of allegiance may be traced.⁹

By observing the *Pilkada* in Karo, this chapter aims to investigate how state-society relations at the local level have changed. Here I use the terms "local state" and "local government" interchangeably. Political scientists, of course, know that the state is larger than government, because it "embodies the national myth, a sense of the national self, even a soteriological promise," whereas government is the ensemble of the state's institutional structures and administrative procedures.¹⁰ However, ordinary Indonesians do not make this distinction. Bureaucrats, thinking of their miniscule salaries, call themselves *abdi negara*, "servants of the state," often with tongue-in-cheek. They use the term "state" to refer to the central government in

⁶ Komisi Pemilihan Umum Daerah Kabupaten Karo (District Election Office of Karo), "Data Pemilih Pemilihan Langsung Kepala Daerah" (Data of Voters in the Direct Election of District Head), information sheet, 2005.

⁷ Badan Informasi dan Komunikasi Provinsi Sumatra Utara (Department of Information and Communication of Sumatra Utara), "Pemerintah Kabupaten Karo" (Karo District Government), <http://www.bainfokomsumut.go.id/online/open.php?id=karo>, accessed on May 28, 2008 (still accessible through <http://www.archive.org>, March 30, 2009). Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism are the five acknowledged (official) religions of Indonesia. A small portion of the population, while officially registered as adhering to one of those five religions, nevertheless practices the traditional rituals of *perbegu* (literal translation: spirit worship).

⁸ See Masri Singarimbung, *Kinship, Descent, and Alliance Among the Karo Batak* (Berkeley, CA, and London: University of California Press, 1975), p. 113.

⁹ The Dutch continued the appointment of four *sibayak*, kings or chiefs, in Tana Karo, leaders who had been traditionally appointed by the Sultan of Aceh. During the colonial era, this position was translated into four administrative subdistrict chiefs in the districts of Tana Karo and Simalungun under the administration of East Sumatra Province until 1945.

¹⁰ David Jacobson, *Rights across Borders: Immigration and the Decline of Citizenship* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), quoted in Joel S. Migdal, "State Building and the Non-Nation State," *Journal of International Affairs* 58,1 (Fall 2004): 22.

Jakarta. At the same time, they refer to themselves, in their own position in the local government, as *orang pemerintah*, "the people of the government." Whereas the sense of the "state" as something bigger and more metaphorical than the administrative "government" survives among members of the bureaucracy, ordinary people in Karo, as elsewhere in Indonesia, use both the terms "state" (*negara*) and "government" (*pemerintah*) to refer to the administrative authority.

Political scientists distinguish between the central and the local state not only in technical, territorial, and administrative terms, but also to emphasize that authoritative power rests with the central state. The Karo people, on the other hand, consider their new local state to represent both the Indonesian administrative machine and an independent source of moral authority. The latter, at times, took on Biblical garb, as evident in the frequent use of terms such as "righteousness" and "sin" in the campaign rallies. Karo residents believe fervently that the newly empowered local state officials and elected *bupati* understand local societal conditions, unlike the Jakarta officials who previously made local policy. They expect the *bupati* to fall into line with local norms, to be "righteous" according to locally determined forms of social capital. At the same time, however, as we shall see, residents still regard highly the connection between the local and the central state and adhere to the state images the latter projects. This explains, for example, why they preferred a *bupati* with a military background.

The term "elites" used in this chapter refers to people who already hold a certain standing in society, through their wealth, education, or involvement in government or political parties. Those aspiring to be district heads in the 2005 election were usually already elites, as were the affluent members of their respective *Tim Sukses*.¹¹ The political elite is the group that predominantly produces decisions binding for the political system.¹² In Karo, candidates running for district head did not come from a preexisting ruling class. They did not have direct ties with the four *sibayaks* (traditional subdistrict administrative chiefs), for example, unlike some Malay gubernatorial candidates in the provincial capital, Medan, who had ties, albeit minimal, with the traditional aristocracy. Karo social and political capital derived instead from education, connection with the government in Jakarta, and reputation.

Some Tana Karo elites made the effort, as we shall see, to use whatever clan association they could muster to make a connection with the specific area from which their ancestors presumably derived. For example, candidate Sinukaban's clan was once prominent in the vicinity of Ruma Brastagi. But this ascriptive association did not influence the constituents as much as did achieved status, gained through one's position as a retired military colonel or a successful businessman, for example. Local people applied the term "elite" to a variety of top people: from businessmen to church laymen, from bureaucrats to military men. However fluid the use of the term

¹¹ Vilfredo Pareto's distinctions among a low stratum of non-elites and a high stratum of elites divided into governing and non-governing actors is relevant to my work. In Pareto's foundational work, "elite" is not identical with "political class," which refers to the smaller "governing elite" of privileged people whose formal position enables them to participate in the workings of government, parliament, and top administration. "Elite" encompasses the broadest idea of leadership. See Vilfredo Pareto, *A Treatise on General Sociology* (New York, NY: Dover, 1963), pp. 1423–24, quoted in Tom Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993), p. 2.

¹² Klaus Von Beyme, "The Concept of Political Class: A New Dimension of Research on Elites?" *West European Politics* 19,1 (January 1996): 68–87.

in Brastagi, "elite-ness" was defined primarily by two characteristics: area of residence and the attitudes of non-elites toward the elites. Elites live in the array of three-story houses along Jalan Veteran, and they are granted respect. Non-elites tend to let elites speak first during formal or informal meetings, such as those that take place in coffeehouses. Unlike in Jakarta or even in the United States, the term "elite" in Tana Karo does not bear a negative connotation, suggesting snobbishness or undemocratic attitudes. Common people aspire to be elites, as it is an achievable status (e.g., not dependent on birth or wealth).

By "common people," I mean the vast mass of ordinary individuals: the government's constituents, such as food-sellers, market vendors, and bus drivers. In short, this category encompasses everyone whose gaze is fixed upon the state while their needs collide with the functioning of it. In the election, for the first time, common people were forced to scrutinize what they perceived as "the state": to distinguish between "righteous and unrighteous" deeds of its officials, and to become conscious of their own power to decide whether they should tolerate the unrighteous persons holding office. This kind of assessment was not necessary before the implementation of direct elections. The opportunity to choose directly the leaders of the local government meant that the local state now had to fulfill the expectation that it would wield a moral authority that had previously been invested in the central state.

For the first time, also, the local state had become something more to its constituents than the distant and uninterested bureaucrats—wearing brownish uniforms and sitting behind old typewriters—with whom residents used to interact during the time-consuming process of getting a citizen ID card or birth certificate. Connection with the state became more, too, than witnessing the mandatory weekly flag-raising ceremony, more than viewing the quick TV images of the president shaking hands with elites in Jakarta, more than imagining the tall buildings in the capital city. The state had become a part of the life of the local society because now residents could choose the head of their "state," the *bupati*, from among the elites familiar to them. The state was suddenly very near. Common people could now construct their own ideal prerequisites of a future leader, could decide on who was best to govern and to be "the *raja*," and thereby actually to become "the state."

Meanwhile, many of the same people who voted were also civil servant wannabes.¹³ They perceived jobs in the *birokrasi* as luxurious, as a means of boosting one's position. The civil service entrance exam is not the only obstacle for such aspirants to overcome, however. Most people are aware of the pervasive culture of "envelopes" (bribes) within the civil service arena. But once a person is hired, the shoe is on the other foot. While a civil servant's monthly salary may be as little as the cost of five dinners, the "grabbing" of bribe money can earn an individual ten times that much. And so some sections of society actually condoned corrupt practices within the state. People think like their "state."

This degree of public acceptance of a bribe-taking culture reflects an ambiguity in local state–society relations. Despite the state's rhetoric about eradicating corruption, non-elites condone the actual practices of the bureaucrats that clash with

¹³ A preference for bureaucratic jobs has been a Batak tradition since the colonial Dutch began to employ local citizens as administrative staff members. Indonesia's history is not unique in this. For a brief account of an instructive Malawian parallel, see Sholto Cross and Milton Kutengule, "Decentralisation and Rural Livelihoods in Malawi," *LADDER Working Paper No. 4*, School of Development Studies (Norwich, UK), September 2001.

that rhetoric. In Karo, this ambiguity softened the local people's condemnation of the unruly deeds of their civil servants.

At this point, I touch the central argument of this chapter, which is the dialectic involving the image of the state and the practices of state officials, as common people experience and perceive them. By observing the impact of *Pilkada* in North Sumatra, this chapter attempts to describe ethnographically the state and thus to transcend what some Western scholarship has simplistically called the state–society dichotomy. In his milestone article on corruption in India, Akhil Gupta stressed the importance of considering both the everyday practices and the “discursive construction” in an ethnography of a state.¹⁴ Everyday practices include the conduct of bureaucrats and other people with a position in the government/parliament, behaviors that are sometimes not in accordance with the discursive construction of the state. Gupta considered the case of the normalized, everyday corruption in a small town in India. In a similar manner, Joel Migdal made a useful distinction between the elements of perception and practices that shape actual states.¹⁵ By observing the practices ethnographically, one may perceive the actual character of the state, which may partially contradict the image of it. The image, which according to Migdal tends to be the same from state to state, refers to “the dominant, integrated, autonomous entity that controls, in a given territory, all rule-making, either directly through its own agencies or indirectly by sanctioning other authorized organizations...”¹⁶ The practices, mostly routinized performative acts, often clash with the image of rationality and authority, yet at the same time become the only terrain in which people, as clients, may actually find the state. Within the Indonesian bureaucracy, for example, it is an unfortunate practice that contractors aspiring to close a business deal involving assessment by bureaucrats volunteer an additional “administrative” fee. Similar practices occur between elites and common people. In Karo, while *Pilkada* candidates projected images of “clean” government in rally speeches, supporters fully expected these patrons to distribute bank-notes to help win their votes.

During the New Order, people may have talked frequently about corruption, yet they could not do anything about it. The image of a righteous state that claims to be against corruption has long contrasted with the actual widespread practice of bribery in all its subtle forms: to obtain fertilizer, to get electric service, or to have one's relative considered for a job in the local office, Karo residents must pay bribes. Both the state and the people have tolerated and normalized these practices. The disjuncture between image and practice came closer to home when elite *Pilkada* candidates were obliged to present themselves as the persons best able to fulfill the promise to establish “clean” government. There were obviously contradictions at work when campaign material emphasized a promise to eradicate *korupsi*, *kolusi*, and *nepotisme*, but at the same time rally-goers expected to get *uang transport* (travel stipends) afterward. Indeed, some constituents preferred their candidate to be wealthy. The disjuncture between image and practice hardly seemed to bother anybody.

¹⁴ Akhil Gupta, “Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State,” *American Ethnologist* 22,2 (1995): 375–402.

¹⁵ Joel Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 16–23.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

How do common people navigate between adhering to their image of the state and the need to accept the pragmatic practices of its parts? In her work on development and rule in Indonesia, Tania Li helps us to understand how the aforementioned ambiguity between image and practice develops. She calls the process "compromise." Li writes that actual rule is culturally informed action. It involves people's knowledge of their state system and of "how things are done."¹⁷ It is this intimate knowledge that emasculates criticism, ensures the continuation of rule, and harmonizes the relationship between the state and its people. *Pilkada* candidates all trumpeted similar anti-corruption ideas, concurring with the rhetoric of good governance. However, at the same time, these candidates knew that their constituents were aware of, and would tolerate, what actually took place. Amid the rhetoric of good governance, money politics linking candidates, civil servants, party officials, voters, and residents were tolerated and condoned by both the elites and the common people.

Knowledge of the incapacity of the state to fulfill its rhetoric, and the understanding of the conduct of officials, is gained through modes of learning facilitated by interaction with local state apparatuses, as well as by the process of reputation-making. My observations in North Sumatra's Batak territories confirm the importance of reputation in shaping political loyalties. Reputation is built through the exchange of words about an elite candidate. The venue of exchange may take the form of small talk on the street, such as that mentioned above, or conversation in a closed, controlled setting such as a coffeehouse or prayer gathering. For those elites who are aware of the importance of reputation-making, these latter places are important for good public relations. Members of a *Tim Sukses* may discreetly or even openly use public places to promote their candidate, while, of course, paying for everyone's coffee in the process. *Kedai* (or Malay *kedai kopi*, "coffee shop") are places where common people observe the behavior of the elites who meet each other there.

The elements of a good reputation are derived from a traditional understanding of elite "social capital." Wealth and education are important. One should also be from an upright family—no drugs or promiscuity involving children or spouse are allowed. Power flows from a current position in, or affiliation with, the central government in Jakarta, whether bureaucratic or military. A corruption-free career track counts. One should be active in church, and be a generous donor there, too. Proof of acquaintance with *adat* comes from attendance at clan gatherings and ceremonies. Nepotism is an acceptable given. It is considered normal that voters from the Sitorus clan in Toba areas, for example, would vote for a candidate from the same clan, who is in turn expected to give jobs to members of this clan upon taking office.

This chapter focuses on the construction of reputations during a *Pilkada* in Kabupaten Karo. Traditional hierarchy played a role in the contest, for the hierarchy implicit in culture/*adat* ceremonies was reproduced in the image of "raja" and "leader" during the campaign period. The Toba Batak, which is the biggest Batak group, is an archetypal hierarchical group whose members value wealth, success, and good reputation as social capital. At the same time, in some respects, Karo culture is more egalitarian than that of its Toba neighbors, and Karo society is more

¹⁷ Tania Murray Li, "Compromising Power: Development, Culture, and Rule in Indonesia," *Cultural Anthropology* 14,3 (2002): 295–322.

familiar with electoral contestation.¹⁸ Karo's coffeehouses are frequented by members of every level of society, regardless of class or identity. This collection of common people, state elites, and parliamentarians in one room at the coffeehouse may resemble a small nation.

REPUTATIONS AND POLITICS

In small communities, where everyone knows everyone else, the spread of information about particular individuals is commonplace. F. G. Bailey emphasizes that small-town politics is all about reputations: about what it means to "have a good name," about being socially bankrupt, about gossip and insults, and about "one-upmanship."¹⁹ A person's reputation is therefore not a quality he or she possesses, but an ascription that is constantly reconstructed by the people around that person. In Tana Karo, the fact that people continuously connected membership in the military with the notions of discipline, clean government, and "righteousness" had a positive effect on the reputation of the candidate who was related to the military.

Reputation also creates an intimate space between the individual being talked about and the audience, and shapes any interaction between the two. In consequence, it was crucial for each candidate to make sure he was being talked about continuously within informal networks and in social spaces like coffeehouses and religious and/or *adat* meetings. Candidates who intensively interacted with the public evoked great interest. Those who did not, consequently, became increasingly unpopular. For example, the young Kalimantan-bred candidate, Arie Sebayang, who could not speak the Karo language, was consequently not well-known among Brastagi dwellers. This weakness emphasized his "foreign"-ness, and it was fatal for his candidacy. The other five candidates did better in this regard, for all of them were already well-known to Karo constituents. They were: D. D. Sinulingga, a retired military man eminent in the two major towns because he had been *bupati* preceding the incumbent Sinar Perangin-angin; Djidin Sebayang, the incumbent deputy district head (*wakil bupati*); Layari Sinukaban, a familiar figure in political party life and the church; the incumbent *bupati*, Perangin-angin; and the well-known businessman Kena Ukur Surbakti, who paired up with the aforementioned PDI-P chairwoman, Siti Aminah.

Being talked about secures one's membership in the community. This membership does not depend upon having a "good" reputation, however, but merely upon having one. Bailey writes that those who are judged to be poor performers, whether in particular roles or according to the summary of comprehensive judgment, are nevertheless part of the community. For example, common people in Karo were still keen to associate with a certain rich candidate who was supported by a major party despite the rumor circulated that he condoned prostitution in his hotels. They treated this piece of information merely as one of the

¹⁸ The Calvinist Karo church (GBKP) elects its deacons, whereas in the Lutheran Toba church (HKBP), the head minister appoints them centrally. For a history of early missionary work and the creation of GBKP, see Rita Smith Kipp, *The Early Years of a Dutch Colonial Mission: The Karo Field* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1990); and Rita Smith Kipp, "Conversion by Affiliation: The History of Karo Batak Protestant Church," *American Ethnologist* 22,4 (1995): 868-82.

¹⁹ F. G. Bailey, "Gift and Poison," in *Gift and Poison: The Politics of Reputation*, ed. F. G. Bailey (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), p. 2.

many indicators of morality. Judging someone's morality, indeed, was not a simple task. A member of the elite who had questionable morals in private could still be respected and hold a position as a church layman. These sorts of contradictions further demonstrate the aforementioned ambiguity in the *Pilkada* case: "clean state" rhetoric existed side by side with voters' acceptance of candidates' questionable or immoral behavior.

Gossip and scandal mongering hold communities together and reaffirm the citizens' shared values.²⁰ Being allowed to participate in a particular exchange of gossip signifies one's membership in the in-group. On the other hand, refusal to participate indicates one's repudiation of the group. Max Gluckman concluded that it is, in fact, good manners to gossip about people with whom one has a close relationship because it demonstrates one's membership in the in-group and one's interest in each other's vices as well as virtues.²¹ Whether the "news" being shared is verifiable might not be an issue for potential voters. "Gossip" and "facts" are seldom compared, scrutinized, challenged, or checked. The thrill of gaining important insight into an individual's lifestyle might make one instantly subscribe to the information without investigating it. In Karo, for example, the head of a department in the district office who was not on good terms with the *bupati* might act to undermine the *bupati* after gaining negative information about him, whether it was based on hearsay or facts.

Gossip provides an individual with a "map of his social environment, including details which are inaccessible to him in his own everyday life."²² People participate in gossiping as a way to determine their choices, because otherwise they may not receive the kind of information needed to make these choices. As we shall see, at this level and in this place, mass media play an insignificant role. As had been Bailey's experience in village India, so in Karo, "one learns from gossip which persons are currently considered desirable or undesirable associates, and how to deal profitably with them."²³ People who supported one candidate in the Karo *Pilkada* tended to form a group to talk about their preferred candidate, or to confirm the negative news about other candidates. This group, as a matter of course, would attract other people to come and listen. Thus, gossip, whether or not consciously deployed by campaign workers, influenced the preferences of constituents and, in turn, the actions of *Pilkada* candidates.

In Karo, it is traditional for men to go to coffeehouses to exchange knowledge through gossiping. Therefore, astute *Tim Sukses* members find coffeehouses useful places in which to spread information about their candidates. What starts as a relaxed conversation about the traffic jam in front of the market might, with the right

²⁰ Max Gluckman, "Papers in Honor of Melville J. Herskovits: Gossip and Scandal," *Current Anthropology* 4,3 (1963): 307-16.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

²² Ulf Hannerz maintained that gossip plays a part within communities and interactional networks, enabling an individual to learn how to deal profitably with others based on their reputed characters. See Ulf Hannerz, "Gossip, Networks, and Culture in a Black American Ghetto," *Ethnos* 32 (1967): 57, quoted in John B. Haviland, *Gossip, Reputation, and Knowledge in Zinacantan* (Chicago, IL, and London: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 10.

²³ Bailey, "Gift and Poison," p. 9. An individual may construct his/her affiliation or join an existing network of affiliation using the instrumental information that is distributed by means of gossiping.

audience, be turned into a subtle advertisement for a candidate whose campaign rhetoric emphasized order, discipline, and cleanliness.

In his analysis of the public sphere, Jürgen Habermas sees the idealized coffeehouse as a civil space between the home and the court.²⁴ Public opinion created in the public sphere puts the state in touch with the needs of society.²⁵ Habermas referred mostly to London coffeehouses in the 1700s,²⁶ which, together with the mass media, created the public sphere that mediated between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy. Rational political preferences were shaped, according to Habermas, through participation in public discussion. The individual discovered "what can serve as the standard for the right and just political action in rational form and with the general interest in mind."²⁷ Rational critical debate concerning public authority and the election involved the educated bourgeoisie and the less educated people. Less educated people tended to heed the advice of the bourgeoisie. "The stream of political opinion flows in a vertical direction."²⁸ Aspiring political leaders gathered support in the public sphere. The vote was thus "the concluding act of continuous controversy carried out publicly between argument and counterargument; ... entitled to vote were those who in any case had been admitted to the public sphere."²⁹

In Karo, as in London during the 1700s, coffeehouses are also egalitarian places in which diverse members of society may meet each other. Elites and common people frequent the same coffeehouses and interact freely. The casual atmosphere helps ease the interaction. However, Karo coffeehouses do not constitute a "public sphere" where negotiations take place, demands are uttered, and political allegiances are formed. Though it does have an egalitarian character similar to its predecessor's in eighteenth-century England, the coffeehouse in Brastagi functions merely as the social terrain where common people come to listen to gossip about the elites and to the exchange of information among members of the elite (e.g., among senior civil servants, members of parliament, political party leaders, and businessmen) or members of *Tim Sukses*.

For common people, unfortunately, the coffeehouse is still not a place to voice a demand to certain elites or to negotiate about the local government. But elites' reputations built in the coffeehouses nevertheless help to form common people's political preferences. This state of affairs further demonstrates the ambiguity created by *Pilkada*: the coffeehouse can bring the "state" close to the people, yet the state does not become more democratic as a result. In this sense, Brastagi's coffeehouses are not

²⁴ Jürgen Habermas, translated by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁶ Ethnographic as well as historical accounts of London coffeehouses may be read, for example, in Steve Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create': Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture," *The Journal of Modern History* 67,4 (1995): 807–34; John Barrel, "Coffee-house Politicians," *Journal of British Studies* 43 (2004): 206–32; and Eric Laurier and Chris Philo, "Cafes and Crowds," talk given at the "Approaching the City" Colloquium, January 15–16, 2004, Department of Geography and Geomatics, University of Glasgow, <http://web.ges.gla.ac.uk/~elaurier/cafesite/texts/elaurier004.pdf>, accessed on March 17, 2009.

²⁷ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, p. 211.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 212–13.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

like the eighteenth-century English coffeehouses, in which the rising middle-class mobilized the space, created a public sphere, and made their voices heard.

New democracies like Indonesia have absorbed campaign practices from established democracies.³⁰ Elites need to ensure a “brand image” to win electoral support as well as to maintain communication among rival elites. In Karo, candidates put up large banners, glued posters on the street, and distributed stickers. Some placards were several meters square. Some candidates also distributed t-shirts displaying their pictures.

Today, the mass media often play a big role in Indonesian local elections. In Bali, for example, the combination of traditional elements of Balinese political order and the use of mass media influenced the new political process.³¹ Balinese mass media created a public sphere, a democratic space, which was used by elites and common people alike. In Karo, however, mass media played only a limited role. Candidates placed advertisements in provincial newspapers, such as the Medan-based *Harian Sinar Indonesia Baru*, perhaps in the form of a small banner on the front or back page that included photographs of the candidates for district head and deputy district head, together with a short slogan. The slogan of D. D. Sinulingga, the ex-military candidate, was *Ras Kita Pesikap Kutanta*, which in Karo means “Together we build our land.” Candidates with strong political party support, such as PDI-P’s Kena Ukur Surbakti and Siti Aminah, used the party symbol as a backdrop for their photographs.

Some candidates actively sought news coverage. A highlight was a report in the Java-based *Harian Suara Karya* on the visit of ex-President Megawati to an open rally of Surbakti and Siti Aminah in the village of Batu Karang.³² Thousands of PDI-P supporters came out to see and cheer for the ex-president, many more than would have attended if just the local candidates had appeared. However, it was hard to tell whether newspaper coverage increased the candidates’ popularity, and sometimes it actually backfired. An article in *Harian Sinar Indonesia Baru* had suggested that the GBKP church supported the candidate Djidin Sebayang. But in an ensuing article the GBKP leadership quickly pointed out that the photo with the article only showed the head of the church shaking hands with Sebayang on the occasion of an audience with the chairman of another party, a Christian one called Partai Damai Sejahtera. Sebayang failed to get the sympathy he had sought from members of the biggest Karo church.

³⁰ For a discussion of the role of mass media in political campaigns around the world and a comparison of those to media practices in the United States, see David L. Swanson and Paolo Mancini, eds., *Politics, Media, and Modern Democracy: An International Study of Innovations in Electoral Campaigning and their Consequences* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996).

³¹ There were strong relations between a Balinese media magnate and district-head candidates who depended on his media for their campaign. Elite candidates for Bali district head in 2005 used both the political capital derived from tradition, which they claimed by visiting local palaces to “ask for blessings” and proclaiming a “Resilient Bali” (*Ajég Bali*), and they also took advantage of modern media coverage, using both sources of influence to form a new, regionalist political stance. See Graeme MacRae and I Nyoman Darma Putra, “A New Theatre-State in Bali? Aristocracies, the Media, and Cultural Revival in the 2005 Local Elections,” *Asian Studies Review* 31 (June 2007): 171–89. See also Henk Schulte Nordholt, *Bali, An Open Fortress 1995–2005: Regional Autonomy, Electoral Democracy, and Entrenched Identities* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007), pp. 61–65.

³² “Megawati: Pilih Pemimpin yang Mengayomi,” *Suara Karya*, September 29, 2005.

Some candidates also used local radio stations to broadcast short announcements. The owner of the only radio station in Brastagi told me he allowed his preferred candidate to air an advertisement several times a day for free. It came with a theme song composed by a well-known local composer, slogans, and an invitation to attend the open rallies.³³ Participants sang along to the same catchy song at the open rallies. The radio also aired discussions arranged by the university to which all candidates were invited.

Compensating the limited role of the mass media, informal interaction was the main reputation-building and vote-getting technique in political campaigns in Karo. Many voters doubted the neutrality of newspapers and tended to believe that candidates paid for positive articles. The minimal role of print media in Tana Karo was also due to the fact that candidates placed so many small advertisements that they ceased to attract readers' attention. The radio ads with their catchy tunes did help to create a pleasant atmosphere, but they mainly raised prestige in a vague way rather than shaping a real campaign. This leaves us with gossiping as the main campaign strategy.

LOCAL ELECTIONS = DEMOCRATIZATION?

Although the public sphere was not fully manifest in Karo, the first district-head elections did bring the local state closer to its society. However, the elections were not devoid of undemocratic practices such as corruption and nepotism. Upon gaining power, patrons rewarded clients who had supported their campaigns, thus emasculating the distinction between public and private wealth. Democratization does not necessarily "destatize" society,³⁴ especially when the latter's associational life is dominated by tradition-, provenance-, or kin-based groups that subscribe to undemocratic (i.e., gerontocratic, hierarchical, or patriarchal) ideals. Too often "civic" leaders engage in national politics out of a narrow concern with how the state can serve their own best interests.³⁵ In Karo, too, individuals sought public office as civil servants, party officials, or politicians primarily to acquire wealth and status.

Pilkada dynamics in Karo illustrated just how sought-after bureaucratic office was there. The church helped enliven civil society, but this failed to weaken the pattern of clientelistic relations, as seen in money politics between candidates and parties, and between candidates and supporters, during the campaign.

THE MILK-COFFEE ENCOUNTER

My milk-coffee encounter took place in Brastagi, a beautiful little town with fresh air and splendid views of the nearby hills. Brastagi attracts tourists in the holiday seasons, although tourist numbers have been declining due to economic hardship and potential earthquakes. The township has been a resort to which visitors

³³ Personal communication with E. S., September 30, 2005.

³⁴ Claude Ake, "Rethinking African Democracy," in *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, 2nd ed., ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore, MD, and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 63–75.

³⁵ Africa provides many similar parallels. See, for example, E. Gyimah-Boadi, "Civil Society in Africa," in *Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies: Themes and Perspectives*, ed. Larry Diamond et al. (Baltimore, MD, and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. 278–92.

travel to escape the tropical heat of Medan since colonial times. A number of bungalows, hotels, and restaurants in the little town are of reasonable quality, and these are usually full during school holidays, when families from Medan take their children to the mountains. During the off season, the hotels are used by Medan government offices for employee training sessions and seminars. The town has only one main street, Jalan Veteran, a long, snaky route that starts as the street of Djamin Ginting in the Padang Bulan suburb of Medan city, which is a two-hour bus ride, or sixty-six kilometers, to the east. After Brastagi, the road connects with Kabanjahe, on the west side, ten kilometers away. Many elite officials reside in Brastagi. Most inherited their large, multi-story houses from their parents, along with hectares of orange groves in nearby villages. Some operate their own business on the ground floor of the house or rent out the space to other people for business. Most coffeehouses occupy the ground floor of such houses. In contrast with Brastagi's breezy atmosphere, Kabanjahe is a comparatively warm town, which hosts the seat of local government. Travelers from Brastagi immediately notice the large, open hall of the *bupati's* residence on the south side of the Veteran. Next to it are the smaller offices of the district parliament (DPRD, Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah) and the district monitoring body (Badan Pengawas Kabupaten).

It was a brisk morning in Brastagi. The usual hustle and bustle on the part of the street used as a temporary bus terminal had begun in front of a market opposite the three-story corner house where I occupied a third-floor room during the months of fieldwork. I had started early that day, hoping to catch the speaker of the district parliament, Ketua DPRD, before he left for work. But a text-message arrived in the last hour, proposing to postpone our prearranged meeting. It did not state an exact time for the rescheduled appointment, suggesting only "around ten," but it gave clear directions to the coffeehouse, next to the billiards salon. I walked there and found the second-in-charge of the district parliament chatting with the chairman of a political party. Between them were two glasses of milk coffee.³⁶ We were soon joined by a man who was a member of the governmental body that monitored the implementation of projects and policies. The *Ketua Kadin*, head of the chamber of commerce, passed by and gave us a wave. Everyone was either wearing shorts or some other informal outfit. The topic was the upcoming *Pilkada*.

It may strike one as odd—especially one who is indoctrinated with Western ideas of efficiency, which I am not—to find two members of parliament and a civil servant in a *kedai* during working hours. Yet my *kedai* encounters were many. In fact, the interior setting of an office did not differ much from that of a cozy little coffeehouse, equipped with tables, disarrayed chairs, and empty glasses, presumably once filled with milk coffee.³⁷ While Akhil Gupta found the Indian state in the lower

³⁶ Most Karo men frequent coffeehouses to have their milk coffee each morning. Not to be confused with the posh *cappuccino* in big cities' cafes, Karo-style milk coffee consists of black coffee, brewed without filtering, flavored with much condensed milk. Some men also enjoy milk tea, served in tall glasses. Drinking milk coffee, and milk tea, at the coffeehouse is an excuse to listen to the newest gossip. The phrase "to go to the coffeehouse [*kedai kopi*]" suggests one is ready for a long chat with other *kedai* frequenters.

³⁷ Everything moved slower in these offices during *Pilkada* months. In general, government offices in Kabanjahe are, in normal periods and at least after lunch, full of people who may be chatting, filling up long notebooks (the usual stationary item in government offices), or playing solitaire on a computer, for those lucky enough to have one on their desks.

part of Sharmanji's two-story little house,³⁸ I found mine in that coffeehouse at ten in the morning. Aside from the four figures mentioned, there were common people present, too, such as bus drivers, noodle vendors, and market-goers. They knew who the four officials were, but none gave a questioning glance that would indicate curiosity about what they were doing there at this hour. One should, however, be careful when concluding that these state people were simply relaxing or wasting time. The conversation was about whether the majority of DPRD members should accept the district head's end-of-term accountability report (*Laporan Pertanggungjawaban Bupati*) that had been delivered the day before. The speaker was getting an "informal" account from a government official, and the party chairman was listening carefully. As he is the speaker of parliament, his personal opinion of the report was influential in the formation of parliamentary opinion. Acceptance or rejection would be decisive for the candidacy of the current *bupati*, and thus his reaction was of great interest to the political parties who supported him.

From the conversation, I gathered that they doubted the report would easily be accepted by all members of parliament. This was especially true of the section of the report that concerned the agricultural project, the Karo Agro System (KAS), which had not been managed well. Yet, against the backdrop of *Pilkada*, the content of the report mattered less than the opportunity for rival parties to pose hard questions to the *bupati*, as well as to reinforce doubt among indecisive members.

"Yes, but with around 25 million [rupiah] per person, he might get it through with no problem," said the civil servant, smiling. The speaker of parliament grinned, albeit showing his obvious discomfort with the statement. "Not everyone would want to accept that," he answered, without denying the possibility that bribing members of parliament could smooth the policy-making process.

While these men were continuously sipping their coffees and munching *cimpeng*, a traditional breakfast snack of deep-fried dough, the civil servant continued in a more relaxed tone: "You see, I'm quite apprehensive about the *bupati*." This statement immediately attracted the attention of the other three listeners and diverted the topic from the disturbing report. He said that a subdistrict head (*camat*), a friend of his, had expressed his concern that the *bupati* might have been influencing some *camats* to ensure a certain number of votes for himself.

"You can imagine, what if he asks every *camat* to guarantee the votes of a hundred to a hundred and fifty heads of families?" The other three looked at each other and mumbled some numbers. That would, indeed, be enough to secure the position.

The man continued by saying that the *bupati*'s ability to issue orders to *camats* would be the basis for an effective reelection campaign. "*Camats* are very fearful [*seگان*] of the *bupati*. That is normal. Especially after what he did to the *camat* of the Pahur subdistrict."³⁹ Everybody nodded. Nobody knew exactly what lay behind the replacement of this *camat*, but people said he had failed to support the *bupati* during the previous (indirect) election, which allegedly involved a certain "donation" by each *camat* toward defraying the campaign's costs.

During the whole conversation, the *kedai*'s non-elite patrons did not hide the fact that they had been listening. Some bus drivers were having black coffee with their fried noodles, and once in awhile threw a glance in our direction. The woman

³⁸ Akhil Gupta, "Blurred Boundaries."

³⁹ Not the real name of the subdistrict.

running the *kedai* was walking amidst the tables, bringing orders to the customers, who clearly enjoyed listening to our conversation more than staring at the food on their plates. One of these customers stood up and shook our civil servant's hand. They knew each other. He was a worker at a neighboring fertilizer store. After shaking everybody's hands, the man joined our table.

The chamber of commerce man, *Ketua Kadin*, said he had been lending his cars for the parades and open rallies promoting the candidate of his choice. He said he had sympathy for this candidate because he was "clean" and had "no money." The *Ketua Kadin* also owned the only radio station in Brastagi, which aired his candidate's campaign spots for free. His candidate's military background would bring back discipline to the streets, he maintained. He expressed concern about youth organizations with members who increasingly acted like thugs (*preman*). "They demand money from the *Cina-cina* [Chinese-owned stores] there," he said, pointing at an array of Chinese businesses across the street. "Some people say they threaten those *Cina*."

The noodle seller came over and stood beside the table. Our conversation about threats to businesses seemed to have attracted her attention. It was also clear that the discourse criticizing youth organizations discredited the incumbent *bupati*, whose candidacy was supported by Partai Patriot, a prominent youth party based on the thuggish youth organization Pemuda Pancasila.

The civil servant also expressed his support for the military candidate, Sinulingga. "I know him from Bandung," he said. Later he emphasized that he felt related to the candidate, although they had no direct family ties. "We call it *perkaden-kaden*."⁴⁰ Literally meaning "relatives" and previously used to embody the three pillars in the Karo kin system (wife-givers or *kalimbubu*, people of the same clan or *senina*, and wife-receivers or *anak-beru*), *perkaden-kaden* is today increasingly regarded as an addition to this same kin system. *Perkaden-kaden* relations outside of the three pillars can grow as strong as family ties. They are built upon perceived similarities between people, such as profession, living area, life history, or even, as here, "just a feeling."

While the head of parliament asked permission to go to work, and the *Ketua Kadin* went back to his store next door, the civil servant and the party chairman continued their discussion a bit longer. They were later joined by other coffeehouse patrons, who had been gazing at us the whole time but had waited a bit before deciding to join us. I suspected the statements of the civil servant and the *Ketua Kadin* had made them eager to know more about the "qualified" candidate with the military background. The drivers stayed away from our table, presuming that we were supporters of a candidate whose main goal was to bring back discipline—by which they understood he meant restoring "order" to the street in front of the busy market by restricting bus parking and eliminating this "temporary" bus terminal.

⁴⁰ Every Karo person will see every other Karo as a relative because everyone would be related by blood or marriage based on the relations between clans or *merga*. Nowadays, the concept of *perkaden-kaden* is used to establish ties among people with no apparent agnatic or affine connections. Mirroring Toba's affine structure, the *Dalihan Na Tolu*, Karo's *Rakut Si Telu*, acknowledges the relations between *sembuyak/senina* (people of the same *merga*) with *kalimbubu* (people of wife-giver's *merga*) and *anak beru* (people of wife-receiver's *merga*). For an elaborate account of Karo's affine system, see Masri Singarimbun, *Kinship, Descent, and Alliance among the Karo Batak* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, and London: University of California Press, 1975).

Indeed, the notions of “discipline” and “order” were significant in *kedai* conversations. Including these qualities as part of their depiction of a good leader, people essentially ascribed “discipline” and “order” to the military candidate, D. D. Sinulingga. In another *kedai*, a member of parliament who claimed he knew the military candidate personally even drew a connection between the candidate and President SBY (Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono). While the candidate was commander of a company in Bandung, SBY had apparently been a battalion commander in the same city. State Minister Mohammad Ma’ruf had meanwhile been the candidate’s friend at the military academy. The member of parliament concluded that if this candidate were chosen, it would bring Karo closer to the center. “It will be easier to gain attention from the center.”

In addition to the ascription of “discipline” and “order,” the military candidate also seemed to embody a “clean,” uncorrupt governance, both due to his military background, experience as a *bupati* preceding the incumbent, and his respectable family. While having milk coffee with me, a member of the military candidate’s *Tim Sukses* confided that he had gained no material benefit from his candidate. He owned a small transportation business, and sometimes even used his own money to provide the candidate with minibuses for a parade. When asked why he supported this particular politician, he repeated the famous characteristics of the candidate: “clean, disciplined, and does not bribe” (*bersih, disiplin, dan tidak main uang*). The military man had been *bupati* before the present incumbent. Things had been much better then than now, said this supporter. The military candidate was thus the “ideal” leader. The man said that the *Ketua Kadin* had contributed a significant sum of money for the campaign.

“His family is also good,” he continued, “compared to the scandalous one of the *bupati*. Have I told you that the district office once asked all civil servants to donate some money? It was said to be to buy medicine for the *bupati*’s son, but the money was used to bail him out of jail! People said the deputy *bupati* contributed around twenty million!” He continued with a story of rivalry between the *bupati*’s late wife and the PDI-P chairwoman for a seat in the district parliament, a competition the wife lost. People said her defeat contributed to the depression that preceded her death.

Virtuous public performances, such as attendance at church services and gift-giving to the church, were other significant indicators of a good leader. Some said they would not vote for one particular candidate, despite his being supported by the then-biggest party in Indonesia, and being at the same time an elder (*pertua*) in the ethnic church GBKP, because they were not impressed by his behavior. “He has *ruma kitik-kitik*,” said one, referring to his hotel business and suggesting that some of his small motels were used for prostitution. One local GBKP leader said that, although the church did not have an official stance, every member of the congregation would know not to choose someone with “questionable morality.” Still, some others said they would try to get something out of this candidate. “Many people from his village came to Hotel Rumang to ask for money.”⁴¹ He has so much of it, he should help his relatives [*saudara*].” Members of his *Tim Sukses* rarely came to the coffeehouse, but I learned from a woman whose husband was the candidate’s best friend that rich members of his *Tim Sukses* were making large donations. After exchanging light chit-chat about how the hotel was now filled with people from the villages, she admitted

⁴¹ Not the real name of the hotel that became the campaign headquarters for this candidate.

she had spent more than six billion rupiah (around US\$503,000) to help finance this candidate's campaign. She had heard that the candidate's wife controlled all the money, and that many *saudara* had returned home, disappointed for failing to receive even travel money, *uang transport*. "A leader should never forget his *saudara*."

A combination of virtuous public performance and the projection of a "disciplined" character impressed middle-class women as well. Besides exchanging gossip about the wives and children of candidates, they shared their husbands' opinion about the necessity of "discipline" and "order." A chat while drinking milk coffee, or milk tea, after attending a prayer gathering in the house of a congregational member, revealed how middle-class women tended to support a *disciplined* candidate. One of them pointed to the chaotic sidewalk in front of the house—the temporary minibuses terminal mentioned at the beginning of this chapter—and said, "Look how dirty it is. With a *bupati* who knows how to impose discipline, we will have a better place to live." She overlooked the fact that she and her friends took those buses to go to Kabanjahe or Medan almost every week.

The discourse of noble characteristics stood in marked contrast to the actualities of the party nomination procedure. During a quick drink, one boss in a small party whose involvement was made possible only because a certain candidate needed a couple of thousand followers to fulfill his quota, admitted that his party had simply been "bought." He claimed he never became too much acquainted with the candidate and that the candidate did not care about the party's platform or ideas. "What is more disturbing," he added, "the entrance fee by which he bought his candidacy through this party is entirely sent to Jakarta. So Jakarta gets the money, while we exist as a mere formality." He said the candidate did not even give the local party any financial assistance for helping prepare the campaign. "He does not need us. He is using his family network in the villages," added the party chief with a sad face. "That is understandable, a candidate would rather work with people he can trust. Why would they want to involve us? Although, actually, we do have our own formal structures that he can also use in the villages."

My milk coffee encounters brought me to faraway villages as I was tracing the rallies of the PDI-P candidates, whose campaign budgets included financing an appearance by Indonesia's ex-president Megawati. Although PDI-P had gained enough support to become the biggest party in Karo, some people resented the "arrogance" of its candidates. A villager in a small coffeehouse said that the PDI-P candidate had once run for a seat in the district parliament in the last election, but destroyed the street lights that he had given to this village during his campaign when the villagers failed to vote for him. Some fellow coffee drinkers, whom I encountered in a small stall after walking the crowded kilometers between the car park and the rally grounds in the village of Batu Karang, where Megawati would speak, gleefully told me that they were there just to see the ex-president. They were not really sure whom they would vote for. Some claimed they did not know the *bupati* candidate, despite his wife being a native of the village. Others voiced their resentment against the "ambitions" of the deputy *bupati* candidate, Siti-Aminah, who was also the chairwoman of the district PDI-P branch.⁴² Thus the largest party failed to place its candidates onto the throne of leadership in Karo.

⁴² On the day Megawati came to the campaign event, a banner hung in the middle of the main road connecting Batu Karang and Kabanjahe. It was signed by "The Supporters of PDIP Batu Karang" (*Warga PDIP Batu Karang*), and it read: "Megawati Yes, Siti Aminah No."

Reputations created through gossiping became one of the factors that brought the military candidate, Sinulingga, to victory in the *Pilkada*. The reputation built around his personality fitted with expectations of a coherent, efficient government. *Bersih, disiplin dan tidak main uang* (clean, disciplined and does not bribe) proved to be successful buzzwords in the campaign. It did not matter to constituents that Sinulingga did not speak as much as others during his open rallies. Constituents did not really listen to what the candidates promised, but relied heavily on the images fed to them. At his first open rally, in Tiga Binanga village, Sinulingga arrived in a parade of cars, some belonging to the *Ketua Kadin*. People welcomed him with the theme song they had heard on the radio, as well as with more traditional songs. There was almost no speech delivered. The candidate merely repeated the aforementioned buzzwords. The songs sung by two women known by the villagers were the main event. Some men of the entourage made short speeches. At the end, Sinulingga stood up and sang the *Erkata Bedil*, a nationalistic song about Karo heroism against the colonial troops in Medan. Everybody sang along.

On the day of the *Pilkada*, people were seen going enthusiastically to the ballot booths holding their voter and identity cards. In one location I visited, I observed witnesses and committee members from the local electoral commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, KPU), and some people whom others recognized as *Tim Sukses* members for several candidates. Children waited for their parents outside the booth's boundary, which was defined with plastic tape. Some people, upon dipping their little finger into the purplish ink—a sign of participation and a safeguard against vote fraud—refrained from going home until the counting, done the same day, was over. "Just out of curiosity," a woman said to me, smiling. She had voted for the military candidate.

Few were surprised that the military man, Sinulingga, won the *Pilkada*, with 41,551 votes. Runner-up was the pair Kena Ukur Surbakti, the rich Karo businessman from Jambi, and the PDI-P chairwoman, Siti Aminah Perangin-angin, with 38,522 votes. The incumbent *bupati*, Sinar Perangin-angin, came in third, with 27,135 votes, followed by Djidin Sebayang, the incumbent deputy *bupati*, with 10,810 votes. Last, as predicted, was the "stranger," Arie Sebayang, with 10,554 votes.⁴³

A year later, the honeymoon was over. The new *bupati* was facing allegations that he was a condescending leader. The GBKP claimed that the public hospital in Kabanjahe, which cost 4.3 billion rupiah, was being built on land that belonged to the church and not to the local government. Others complained of the "corporal punishment" inflicted on hundreds of civil servants in the *bupati's* office as punishment for failing to raise the flag perfectly during a ceremony. More serious allegations mentioned the new *bupati's* hasty decisions, which bore traces of nepotism. Sixteen heads of units were ousted on the grounds of mishandling funds, and some were replaced by new people from outside of the local office. Gossip had it that some of those ousted were connected to the *Tim Sukses* of incumbent *Bupati* Perangin-angin, and that at least one of those promoted had a family tie, albeit somewhat distant, with the new *bupati*. Common people did not really know what had happened, but they talked about it. Some agreed with the *bupati's* decision, for "we need to learn to be disciplined" and "it is his prerogative to transfer or dismiss

⁴³ "DD-Nelson Unggul di Pilkada Karo," *Suara Karya*, October 15, 2005.

his subordinates." Others jeered in contempt and disappointment.⁴⁴ "Maybe because he is from the military, he is not used to the culture of consultation [*musyawarah* and *mufakat*]," said a former supporter.

PILKADA: NEGOTIATING WITH THE STATE

The *Pilkada* in North Sumatra proved relatively successful. Voter turnout was nearly 100 percent. No alleged fraud was thought worthy of a lengthy court trial.⁴⁵ A direct election for district head, as part of the decentralization process, was a new experience for everyone: for the elite candidates, the political parties who formally supported them, as well as for the common people, the constituents. The quality of newness had two aspects.

First, the "state," formerly so abstract, was brought down to the local level, made visible to the common people, and concretized in living individuals. The new "state" brought elites to the common people's social terrain, where righteous and unrighteous deeds were open for public viewing and scrutiny. Identity, family background, reputation, education, and other forms of social capital suddenly became the business of the common people, who found they had become constituents whose opinion mattered to the elites aspiring to lead the local "state." Elites constructed their political preference from this scrutiny. Thus, the new method of changing local government leadership brought the local state closer to its people. The act of directly choosing a district head, and not the opportunity to elect candidates for any other level of leadership, brought the "state" to the local level.⁴⁶

At first glance, this development seems to fit perfectly with the logic of good governance: the local bureaucracy performs at its best for the benefit of the

⁴⁴ One of those individuals who lost a job told me the *bupati* was getting rid of those who had supported the previous *bupati*. But the situation apparently was more serious than mere revenge. The charge of employees' mishandling funds was eventually brought to the anti-corruption court (*Tipikor-Pengadilan Tinggi Tindak Pidana Korupsi*).

⁴⁵ There were some minor resentments among individuals who lost their "application" in the internal party convention, a situation that left them resentful against the winning candidates. Allegations of money politics as well as nepotism in the *Pilkada* process begin here. An example of these allegations took place during the PDI-P's candidacy process in the district of Toba-Samosir. The district and provincial branches of PDI-P supported different candidates in the *Pilkada*. This led to a mass demonstration in front of the District Election Office (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum Daerah, KPUD*) of Toba-Samosir. The case against KPUD was brought to court by PDI-P's district branch. Nevertheless, the preference of the provincial branch prevailed. Eventually, the successful PDI-P candidate, Monang Sitorus, also won the district *Pilkada*.

⁴⁶ Subdistrict authorities in Indonesia have long organized direct neighborhood elections for leaders of the neighborhood organizations *Rukun Tetangga (RT)* and *Rukun Warga (RW)*, both charged with obtaining data on the households in a specific area. However, these are not part of the administrative hierarchy. Leaders of RT and RW do not receive a full salary, aside from a meager sum termed an "assistance fund." A higher position that also requires direct election is that of the village head, *Kepala Desa*. This position is prestigious in the village, but the village head is not part of the civil service. The village heads are coordinated by the *camat*, who is a civil servant. In town, a parallel position to village head is the *lurah*, who is an unelected civil servant chosen by the *bupati* and accountable to the *camat*, who is also chosen by the *bupati*. The village head is not considered to be a representative of the state. In Karo, a village head receives only Rp. 300,000 per month (about US\$26). The Association of Village Heads (*Akad*) wrote a letter to the *bupati* of Karo demanding a raise. See *Harian Sinar Indonesia Baru*, February 15, 2007.

population, and the latter responds with political support. Yet, in a country marred by centuries of patron–client configurations, such as Indonesia, the idea of making popular preferences an indicator of effective governance is not without problems. Common people have always been distant from the state, and they could hardly affect it significantly even following decentralization. While government buildings and low-level officials were always visible to the common people, the *kabupaten* was also seen as the place where the privileged made a living. The local “state” had been distant from the common people. Membership in the civil service, from the government office to the classroom, had always been seen as an achievement and a luxury. For those with few connections to the state, the centralized wall of civil-service “examinations” was and remains almost insurmountable. For those able to overcome and actively participate in the system, the hardship lay in the intricate network of personal favors that one has to engage in, and the lofty sums of “gratitude” money one has to provide to the right people.



The collective open rally organized by the GBKP church, featuring district-head candidates

The district-head election at once brought the local state closer to its people and increased the hegemony of Jakarta. On the one hand, the election produced the leadership that local people preferred, thus weakening the central state’s influence on local policy-making. But on the other hand, a candidate’s connection with political and economic power at the center became part of the “social capital” essential for electoral success. The new *bupati* of Tana Karo, Sinulingga, was a retired colonel. Only his father had resided for a long time in Kabanjahe, while he himself had spent more years in Java and other parts of Sumatra on military duty. Of course, he had also been Karo’s *bupati* once before, and this played a major role in his *Pilkada* victory. But he was at that time a functionary of the centralistic New Order. In the neighboring district of Toba-Samosir, meanwhile, the new *bupati* had a kinship tie with the (supposedly) richest Batak businessman in the country. In Medan, the mayor was reelected because he was also a successful businessman with ties to entrepreneurs in Jakarta.

The second aspect of the novelty brought by the direct election relates to the ambiguity of the argument that successful elections can bring about substantive democracy in patrimonial states. In fact, some aspects of the popular suffrage process can operate very well within a clientelistic environment. On the surface, the successful district head elections in North Sumatra could be considered a triumph of participatory democracy. But certain patrimonial aspects of local politics qualify the triumph. They are identity politics, money politics, and the minimal role of political parties. The first concerns the function of ethnicity and religion in the elections. Almost all district head candidates in Karo had a Karo sub-ethnic and Protestant background. The GBKP church played a significant role in forming the political opinions of its members. For example, it held a massive open rally involving thousands of congregation members and all six *Pilkada* candidates, in which the former could pose questions to the latter. This meeting marked the involvement of the church in stimulating the political participation of its congregation. It established the church's support for a state program that had hitherto escaped the church's attention. The church's familiarity with popular suffrage in the new local politics partly owes to GBKP's presbyterial-synodal polity. Church elders have long been directly elected by the congregation.⁴⁷ The involvement of the church may be regarded as signifying an increasing role for civic associations in local politics. But it also stimulated candidates to exploit their connections with the church, and made voting in the *Pilkada* more an act of religious obligation or loyalty to one's kin and less one of conscious political choice.

Another novel aspect concerns the diminished role of political parties. Party ideals were irrelevant. Local networks were far more important than party positions. The party-based district parliamentary elections held in Karo in 2004 excited less interest than the *bupati's* election the following year. District parliamentarians were thought, appropriately, to represent only a small segment of society, namely, a political party, if not just himself or herself. People discussed political parties with more detachment than they did district head candidates. They would point out that local leaders of certain major parties had to bribe higher party bosses to secure slots on the party's candidates list. At the same time, they spoke of this practice with less contempt than when they talked about the unruly affairs of district head candidates. As for the parliamentarians themselves, some treated their job more as a personal achievement and a luxury than as a position that demanded responsibility to constituents. One explained to me that his election strategy depended on cultivating the area where his relatives lived, another that he was enlisted because he had a close relationship with a Jakarta party boss. Nobody talked about the platform or ideals of the party. One man obtained his leadership position in a certain religious party after a phone call from an elite friend in Jakarta, although his religion differed from that of the party.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ This Calvinist tradition of GBKP's is not shared by the more Lutheran-Episcopalian church HKBP, which is the main church of Toba. In the HKBP, the main minister—not the congregation—ordains the elders. This difference in church practice helps explain the difference between voters' behavior in the Karo and Toba areas. See Deasy Simandjuntak, "Who Shall Be Radja? The Competition of Local Elites within the Decentralization Process in North Sumatra, Indonesia" (PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam School for Social Science Research), forthcoming, chapters II and IV.

⁴⁸ Personal communication with T. M., vice-chairman of an Islamic party, September 26–30, 2005.

Meanwhile, money politics is simple bribery: gift-giving in exchange for political loyalty. Candidates distributed money to their potential voters to develop loyalty.⁴⁹ This assured clients that elites would attend to their needs and led them to reciprocate with political loyalty at election time. Money politics also affected the internal process by which a political party designated its candidates. Parties were a “vehicle” minus ideology. In order to ensure that candidates had at least some support, they had to be officially put forward by parties. In reality, candidates sought support from *any* party, regardless of ideals or platforms, since political parties are about elite negotiations rather than ideology. A party required a non-refundable “application fee” before it would consider a potential candidate. The local branch signed the papers, but the central leadership had the power to approve a candidate and collect the fee. Aspiring elites “rented” the parties to be their political “boats.” This function of political parties, too, was a novelty for both elites and party leaders. The expenses incurred, naturally, became an incentive for corrupt practices after the election.

FINDING THE LOCAL STATE IN PUBLIC: PROXIMITY AND EMBEDDEDNESS

In conclusion, *Pilkada* in North Sumatra demonstrated an ambiguity in the relationship between the (local) state and society. Despite shortening the distance between the state and society, *Pilkada* did not actually improve democratic processes. The opportunity for constituents to scrutinize candidate district heads who would represent the “state” did not prevent these prospective voters from condoning the questionable practices of bureaucrats and other members of the political elite. Constituents considered bureaucratic positions a luxury, of which they would also like to partake. This even led them to tolerate a candidate who was said to tolerate prostitution. The “democratic” space of the coffeehouse was mainly filled with reputation-making and one-sided elite campaigning. Discussion between elites and common people was minimal, unlike what Habermas detected in the eighteenth-century European public sphere. The tolerance of undemocratic money politics linking candidates and constituents and linking candidates and parties further emphasized the system’s dysfunctional aspects. The *Pilkada* also revealed that local constituents still consider the central state valuable. The winner was the one who had the clearest connection with the central state and could thus deliver central resources to the local government.

Nevertheless, observing state–society relations through local eyes helps us appreciate ways in which ordinary people’s enthusiasm about the new “democratic” experience, and their growing familiarity with the state, might bring local governance one step closer to democracy.

⁴⁹ In a similar, non-Indonesian example of the importance of small gifts, Staffan Lindberg records the function of small cash sums, called “chop-money,” in what was widely considered a democratic MP (parliament) election in Ghana. The practice of paying chop-money included paying individuals’ electricity and water bills, funeral and wedding expenses, or school fees, or distributing agricultural tools. See Staffan I. Lindberg, “It’s Our Time to ‘Chop’: Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism rather than Counteract It?” *Democratization* 10,2 (2003): 121–40.

THE MAJELIS ULAMA INDONESIA VERSUS “HERESY”: THE RESURGENCE OF AUTHORITARIAN ISLAM

John Olle

INTRODUCTION: THE RESURGENCE OF AUTHORITARIAN ISLAM

In April 2005, the Council of Indonesian Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) held a nationwide conference of Islamic organizations. The Fourth Indonesian Islamic Community Congress (Kongres Umat Islam Indonesia, KUII) brought together a wide spectrum of opinion. The third congress had been held in November 1998, in the pre-election euphoria following President Suharto's resignation. It called for women to be barred from standing for the presidency. This fourth congress produced similarly controversial outcomes.

In claiming to be the inheritors of two earlier congresses held in 1947 and 1952, well before the Suharto-sponsored establishment of the MUI in 1975, the organizers of the third and fourth congresses revealed their intention to re-politicize Islam in the post-Suharto environment. By making clear the hiatus dividing the meetings in 1998 and 2005 from the two earlier congresses, a hiatus that spanned the Guided Democracy and New Order periods, they aimed to illustrate the long period of repression of political Islam in Indonesia. The fourth congress also reflected the political realignments of the post-Suharto era. MUI had been generally seen as a mouthpiece for the Suharto government within the Muslim community. It had perceived its own role as one concerned with maintaining social control, defining religious orthodoxy, and ensuring harmony among religions.¹

The congress attracted groups and individuals whose attachment to the ideologies of political Islam had often placed them at loggerheads with the Suharto regime. Also present were a range of newer post-Suharto radical Islamist groups, such as the Assembly of Islamic Warriors (Majelis Mujahiddin Indonesia, MMI), Islamic Defender's Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), and Hizbut Tahrir. The congress also included representatives of the two largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), usually described as

¹ D. J. Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia* (London and New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 76–83.

modernist/urban and traditionalist/rural in origin, respectively. In contrast to the MUI and radical Islamists, these latter two groups could claim to represent the great majority of Indonesia's Muslim population, and they have been commonly labeled in the post-Suharto period as the main moderate or mainstream Islamic groups.

Despite the diversity of participating groups, one of the congress's more significant decisions was to reemphasize a decision made during the national meeting of MUI in 2000 that dealing with heresy should be a special priority. As one sympathetic reporter put it, heresy was clearly more important than other major social problems such as corruption, bribery, adultery, abortion, pornography, narcotics, gambling, alcohol, copyright infringement, criminality, destruction of the environment, violence, and enmity.²

Following the congress, a series of attacks took place against Islamic groups accused of being heretics. Most notable were two attacks on the headquarters of the Ahmadiyah movement in Bogor in July 2005 by radical Islamist groups, including the FPI and the Islamic Research and Study Institute (Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam, LPPI), a group specifically focused on rooting out heresy. These attacks were given moral justification by preceding and subsequent *fatawa*³ from the MUI. Attacks of various kinds on other groups of alleged heretics occurred in East Java, West Java, Jakarta, and Lombok over a period of about a year.

These developments give rise to two questions. Firstly, why should a major congress of Islamic groups, including moderate mainstream groups such as NU and Muhammadiyah, decide to focus on heresy as a problem rather than on some other major social issues? Secondly, how could MUI, originating from the New Order state, now work together with previously marginalized radical groups such as LPPI and FPI to promote a contentious and divisive antiheresy agenda?

After briefly laying out the historical background, this chapter will attempt to answer these questions by examining the roles of two individuals involved in the attacks on Ahmadiyah and other heretics in the 2005–2006 period. One is a provincial president of the MUI who has been involved in that organization since its inception. The other is an anti-Suharto activist who had been arrested several times under the New Order, who had for many years researched and led attacks on heretics, and who was recently appointed to the MUI. Although coming from different backgrounds, these two individuals promoted a similar and rather innovative discourse. It joined radical and conservative Islamic voices into a single discourse in favor of a New Order-style agenda for religious standardization and social control focused on public morality, depicted as building a virtuous society based on *Shari'a* law.

ISLAM IN INDONESIAN POLITICS

The early history of independent Indonesia was colored by constant ideological debate as to whether Sukarno's compromise ideology of *Pancasila* or some version of

² W. Hifdzy, "'Berdagang' Ajaran Sesat Lewat Pesantren," *Warta* XX,19, vol. I (July 2005): 4–5. This is a monthly tabloid officially published by the NU (PBNU), but based in Surabaya.

³ *Fatwa* is singular, *fatawa* is the plural form. According to M. B. Hooker, "A fatwa is a formal advice from an authority on a point of Islamic law or dogma." M. B. Hooker, *Indonesian Islam: Social Change through Contemporary Fatawa* (Crow's Nest, NSW: Asian Studies Association of Australia, with Allen & Unwin; and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), p. viii.

Islam should constitute the ideological basis of the state.⁴ Those advocating Islam (mostly modernist, urban individuals and groups centered on the Masyumi party) were on the back foot for much of this period. Pressure from non-Muslims and nonreligious nationalists had led at the last minute, in August 1945, to the omission of a sentence that appeared in the earlier draft constitution of July 1945 (known as the Jakarta Charter) that would have made it compulsory for all Muslims to follow the *Shari'a*.⁵ An Islamist agenda was also frustrated by the results of the 1955 election, in which overtly Islamic parties (Masyumi and NU) only achieved 20.9 percent and 18.4 percent of the vote, respectively.⁶ Two regional rebellions then made the army leadership and much of the political elite in Jakarta even more suspicious of any form of political Islam. One was the lengthy Darul Islam guerrilla struggle in Aceh, West Java, South Kalimantan, and South Sulawesi during the 1950s and early 1960s.⁷ The other was the Permesta rebellion, mounted by disaffected regional military commanders in West Sumatra and Sulawesi between 1956–60, which was supported by some leading members of the Masyumi party.⁸ By the late 1950s, Masyumi's opponents "suspected it of latent religious fanaticism."⁹ The last major opportunity to enshrine Islam as the basis of the state came during the Konstituante, a body elected to develop a new constitution. But it became deadlocked over the issue in 1959, and then Sukarno and the army reimposed the 1945 constitution, ushering in a period of "Guided Democracy."¹⁰ Open debate was no longer possible. The government accused Masyumi of involvement in the Permesta rebellion and banned it in 1960.¹¹ According to Martin Van Bruinessen, these events have "marked state-Islam relations in Indonesia ever since."¹²

Disenchantment with Sukarno led activists with an Islamist agenda to support Suharto's moves to replace him during the 1965–1966 events that ushered in the New Order. However, their hopes of a greater political role for Islam were soon disappointed. All political parties were forced to amalgamate into a small number of closely supervised organizations in 1973. Muslim parties fused into the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP).¹³ Suharto imposed indoctrination courses with a heavily Javanized and integralist interpretation of

⁴ Whilst *Pancasila* was originally seen as a compromise ideology accommodating secular nationalists and non-Muslims, on the one hand, and Islamists, on the other, the political dynamics of the 1950s turned it into "anti-Moslem property," according to Herbert Feith, quoted in B. J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 91.

⁵ Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, pp. 35–36.

⁶ NU withdrew from Masyumi in 1952.

⁷ C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981).

⁸ B. S. Harvey, *Permesta: Half a Rebellion* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1977).

⁹ M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia* (London: Macmillan, 1981), p. 228.

¹⁰ A. B. Nasution, *The Aspiration for Constitutional Government in Indonesia: A Socio-legal Study of the Indonesian Konstituante, 1956–1959* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1992), pp. 401–04, 414.

¹¹ Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, pp. 90, 103.

¹² M. Van Bruinessen, "Islamic State or State Islam? Fifty Years of State-Islam Relations in Indonesia," in *Indonesien am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Ingrid Wessel (Hamburg: Abera-Verlag, 1996).

¹³ D. E. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam, and the Ideology of Tolerance* (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 1995), p. 30.

Pancasila, and in 1985 forced all community organizations, even Islamic ones, to adopt *Pancasila* as their "sole basis."¹⁴

During the 1970s and 1980s, Suharto sought to neutralize any potential Islamic opposition by developing, as Porter put it, "a range of corporatist initiatives for the capture of target segments of the Muslim constituency, such as mosque, preachers', intellectuals', *ulama* (Muslim religious scholars/leaders), and women's associations into non-party organizations." The MUI was the peak body amongst several organizations designed to "co-opt, fragment, and neutralize Islam as an autonomous political force, regulate associational life, and ensure mass turnouts for Golkar at election time."¹⁵ As a state-appointed and state-financed body, MUI had little legitimacy in the eyes of ordinary Muslims.¹⁶ The first central president of MUI was the independent-minded Buya Hamka, a Muhammadiyah activist; he withdrew from the organization in 1981, however, due to differences with the government. In order to avoid a repetition of such a conflict, "the regime encouraged the appointment of compliant *ulama*, some of them bureaucrats, to the chairmanship and to leadership positions on the council's ten commissions."¹⁷ Hooker describes MUI as representing the "bureaucratisation of Islam ... in its most extreme form."¹⁸

Ruth McVey connected Suharto's desire to control the Muslim community and his efforts to limit political Islam to his supposed support for "syncretic Javanese beliefs," in contrast to the more formal types of Islam.¹⁹ Writing later, after the fall of the New Order, Robert Hefner and others have pointed out that Suharto's religious policies followed the needs of power rather than those of inner belief.²⁰ This motivation grew more evident in the late 1980s, when Suharto began to shift his support base away from the armed forces and towards Golkar and other civilian corporatist groups, particularly Muslim ones such as MUI.²¹ In December 1990, he diversified his power base further by establishing the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia, ICMI), led by his technology minister, B. J. Habibie. Suharto intended this organization to co-opt Muslim radicals he had previously labeled "extremists"—some had even advocated democratic reforms—into "safe channels."²² However, ICMI proved an unsatisfactory instrument due to the wide range of opinion in the organization, including voices critical of Suharto. After attempting in 1995 to fragment ICMI's intelligentsia and promote criticism of the organization through one of his cabinet

¹⁴ The Guide for the Comprehension and Implementation of Pancasila (*Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila*, P4) was a compulsory program carried out throughout the bureaucracy, school system, and community organizations. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia*, p. 36.

¹⁵ Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*, p. 77.

¹⁶ Hooker, *Indonesian Islam*, p. 60.

¹⁷ Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*, p. 78.

¹⁸ Hooker, *Indonesian Islam*, p. 60.

¹⁹ R. McVey, "Faith as the Outsider: Islam in Indonesian Politics," in *Islam in the Political Process*, ed. J. Piscatori (Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 199, 203.

²⁰ R. W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 128–29; M. Van Bruinessen, "Islamic State or State Islam?"

²¹ Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia*, pp. 42–43.

²² Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*, p. 92.

ministers, who called the organization "sectarian and exclusive,"²³ Suharto turned to a smaller and more amenable group to reinforce his rule.

Hefner describes in detail how a group of what he calls "regimist" Muslim intellectuals and activists at Golkar's research and development department and the Center for Policy and Development Studies worked hard throughout the 1990s to prop up and fend off challenges to the Suharto regime.²⁴ They saw the biggest threats in Megawati Sukarnoputri, secular pro-democracy activists, and democratic Muslim intellectuals. Central figures in the group were Din Syamsuddin, Amir Santoso, and Fadli Zon. They felt that supporting Suharto and reaping "the benefits of collaboration" was a more useful way of advancing Islam than was siding with the democratic opposition.²⁵ The regimist Muslims depended on Suharto and his family for funding, but they also linked up with a group of "green" (overtly Islamic) generals, as well as, more interestingly, with some radical activist groups. One such group was the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World (Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas dengan Dunia Islam, KISDI), led by Ahmad Sumargono; another was the Indonesian Islamic Missionary Council (Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia, DDII), which claimed to be the inheritor of the Masyumi party. The group engaged in surprisingly un-New Order-like direct action. Hefner claims it was responsible for both the "Monitor Affair" in 1990 and the "Permadi Affair" in 1995.²⁶ In the first case, demonstrations were organized against the *Monitor* newspaper, part of the Catholic-owned Kompas-Gramedia group; in the second, demonstrations turned against Permadi, a well-known Javanese mystic and Megawati supporter, protesting his supposed slander of the Prophet Mohammad. Other regimist Muslims, such as Hasan Basri, whom Suharto had himself placed at the head of the MUI in 1993, and who was also close to the DDII, joined in the attack on Permadi. This group of pro-regime Muslim leaders was also responsible for circulating a supposedly secret report in the run-up to the 1997 election identifying an anti-Suharto conspiracy of pro-democracy and nationalist military figures,²⁷ as well as a post-election November 1997 booklet that described a "Jewish-Jesuit-American-Chinese" plot to overthrow Suharto.²⁸

In its attachment to conspiracy theories, its creation of "issues," its willing acquiescence to authoritarianism, and the use of violent demonstrations, this group used tactics that presaged those later used to attack "heretics." Indeed, many of the same individuals were involved in those attacks.

THE REGIME UNRAVELS

In 1998, after almost a year of economic crisis and several months of continuous student protests that saw the kidnapping and disappearance of some pro-democracy activists and the deadly shooting of several students at Trisakti University, in

²³ Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia*, p. 190.

²⁴ Hefner, *Civil Islam*, pp. 151–80.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 151–80.

²⁷ G. van Klinken, "Digest No. 29—Conspiracies," *Inside Indonesia*, 1997, archived copy available at <http://www.library.ohiou.edu/indopubs/1997/03/29/0053.html>, last accessed April 2009.

²⁸ Hefner, *Civil Islam*, pp. 201–04.

Jakarta, Suharto resigned on May 21. Masses of students occupied the Indonesian parliament building. Most of the president's closest associates had deserted him. Many people now expected democracy and freedom to flower in every area of life. New political and religious groups proliferated, among them a number dominated by persons whom the foreign press (but not the members themselves) soon called "radical Islamists."

However, the transition also produced several long-running episodes of ethnic and religious violence. In Central and West Kalimantan, conflict broke out between Dayaks and Madurese; in Ambon, the North Moluccas, and central Sulawesi, there was fighting between Christians and Muslims. In other incidents of mass violence, churches and mosques were destroyed in Jakarta and Kupang, West Timor, and Muslim religious figures were killed by mysterious "ninja" in East Java. Some traced the violence to New Order competition among networks of "clientelist hierarchies based on patrons in the capital," which included "former generals, politico-bureaucrats, entrepreneurs and state-connected hoodlums."²⁹ Suharto himself had played a part with his manipulation of religious factionalism. Communal conflicts claimed about 10,000 lives, and it is estimated that nearly as many died in violent conflicts in Aceh and East Timor.³⁰

Some of the post-Suharto Islamist groups contributed to the violence. The FPI regularly attacked nightclubs and churches. The Java-based Laskar Jihad (Islamic Warriors) sent troops to Ambon, the North Moluccas, and Sulawesi, and it has been claimed that elements in the army helped them.³¹ Battles between police and army units were also a regular occurrence.³² It was in this violent atmosphere that the attacks on those accused of heresy took place.

ATTACKS ON HERETICS

On May 6, 2005, police arrested Yusman Roy in Malang, East Java. The local MUI had accused him of promoting bilingual *sholat* (daily prayers).³³ Three weeks

²⁹ Ruth McVey, "Nation versus State in Indonesia," in *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*, ed. D. Kingsbury and H. Aveling (London and New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 22; D. Bourchier and V. R. Hadiz, *Indonesian Politics and Society: A Reader* (London and New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 22.

³⁰ A. Varshney, R. Panggabean, and M. Z. Tadjoeuddin, *Patterns of Collective Violence in Indonesia (1990–2003)* (Jakarta: United Nations Support Facility for Indonesian Recovery [UNSFIR], 2004); G. van Klinken, *Communal Conflict and Decentralisation in Indonesia*, The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (ACPACS) Occasional Papers Series [Online], no. 7, July 2007, available at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per_id=890930 as of March 2009.

³¹ D. Kingsbury, *Power Politics, and the Indonesian Military* (London and New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 9. See also Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2006).

³² H. Crouch, "Political Update 2002: Megawati's Holding Operation," in *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation*, ed. E. Aspinall, and G. Fealy (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003), p. 32.

³³ "Kontroversi shalat Bahasa Indonesia-Ustadz Roy Tersangka, Gus Dur Kecam Polisi," *Harian Kompas*, May 10, 2005. MUI East Java had earlier condemned Yusman Roy by *fatwa* on February 12, 2005. See "Shalat Berbahasa Indonesia di Surabaya," April 30, 2005, <http://www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/nusa/jawamadura/2005/04/30/brk,20050430-13, id.html>, accessed on August 30, 2007.

later, on May 27, a mob attacked the headquarters of a group in Probolinggo, East Java, active in helping victims of cancer and narcotics (Yayasan Kanker dan Narkoba Cahaya Alam, YKNCA).³⁴ Both Yusman Roy and, bizarrely, the YKNCA were charged with "staining" or "despoiling" religion under article 156a of the Criminal Law Code. The New Order regime had often used this article against dissidents. In both these cases, the local branch of the MUI submitted evidence of heresy to the court.

On July 9 and 15, 2005, mobs led by the FPI and LPPI, along with other groups, twice attacked the Ahmadiyah center in Parung, Bogor, near Jakarta.³⁵ Ahmadiyah is an international Islamic sect, founded in India in the 1880s and present in Indonesia since the mid-1920s. The attackers accused the organization of heresy based on the fact that Ahmadiyah believes its founder to have been a new prophet, an idea unacceptable to orthodox Muslims.³⁶ They justified their attack by referring to a *fatwa* by MUI in 1980 prohibiting Muslims from following Ahmadiyah.³⁷ To defend itself from the suggestion that it had abetted violence, MUI itself claimed that its 1980 *fatwa* had been aimed precisely at *preventing* violence in the community:

Ma'ruf Amin [head of the MUI *fatwa* commission] said that the role of MUI was to try to prevent strife and mass violence, which, it fears, could occur as a result of heresy. The state has an interest in preventing disturbances in the community.³⁸

However, the fact that MUI did not explicitly reject the mob's misuse of its 1980 *fatwa* in this way makes it hard to avoid the conclusion that MUI was effectively encouraging other groups to use violence. The more local Yusman Roy and YKNCA cases followed a similar pattern. Activist groups such as LPPI and FPI consider a MUI *fatwa* to be an expression of Islamic law and therefore a valid basis for action. They regard arguments by Muslim scholars that *fatawa* are only opinions and lack the status of law (*hukm*) as invalid—mere exercises in hair splitting.³⁹

³⁴ "Padepokan Aliran Sesat Probolinggo Dihancurkan Massa," May 30, 2005, <http://www.korantempo.com/news/2005/5/30/Nusa/24.html>, accessed on August 30, 2007.

³⁵ "Marah Pada yang Diberkahi," *Gatra*, July 23, 2005, pp. 98–99; "Mengusir Para Pengikut Ghulam," *Duta Masyarakat*, July 24, 2005, pp. i, vii.

³⁶ There are two separate Ahmadiyah organizations. The Ahmadiyah Lahore group does not maintain that its founder was a new prophet. Members of the group attacked here—the Ahmadiyah Qadian group—do make that assertion.

³⁷ "Terror upon Ahmadiyya and Freedom of Religion," July 18, 2005, at <http://islamlib.com/en/article/terror-upon-ahmadiyya-and-freedom-of-religion>, as viewed on March 9, 2009. "Ahmadiyah Minta Hentikan Ancaman," *Harian Bangsa*, July 19, 2005, pp. 1, 11; "MUI Diminta Cabut Fatwa," *Harian Bangsa*, July 30, 2005, pp. 1, 11; and "Ahmadiyah Tolak Jadi Agama Baru," *Harian Bangsa*, February 11, 2006, pp. 1, 11. "Pembunuh Saja Bisa Membela Diri," *Jawa Pos*, February 12, 2006, p. 10. "Empat Perkampungan Ahmadiyah Diserang," *Jawa Pos*, September 21, 2005, p. 14. Also interviews with informants.

³⁸ "MUI Tetapkan Suatu Ajaran Sesat untuk Cegah Kekacauan dalam Masyarakat," http://www.nu.or.id/data_detail.asp?id_data=5149&kategori=WARTA, accessed in June 2007.

³⁹ A. Tayob, "The Role and Identity of Religious Authorities in the Nation State: Egypt, Indonesia, and South African Comparison," conference paper presented at the final conference of the "Dissemination of Religious Authority in Twentieth-Century Indonesia Programme,"

The attack in Bogor was followed by a national meeting of the MUI in July 2005 that renewed the 1980 *fatwa* against Ahmadiyah. MUI then issued further *fatawa* prohibiting a wider range of ideas, including "secularism," "liberalism," and "pluralism." It also forbade Muslims from participating in prayers with the followers of other religions. More mainstream Muslims thereupon condemned MUI for condoning violence, for practicing mind-control over the Muslim community, and for disrespecting the pluralist principles of *Pancasila*.⁴⁰

More violence soon followed these intolerant *fatawa*. In August 2005, a wave of attacks on supposedly illegal churches in Jakarta and West Java by radical groups attempted to force the government to regulate the establishment of new places of worship more closely.⁴¹ In September 2005, FPI tried to attack the headquarters in East Jakarta of the Islamic Liberal Network (Jaringan Islam Liberal, JIL), a group promoting moderate and inclusive Islamic views. They were repelled by locals who rallied to prevent interference with the group.⁴² Further attacks on Ahmadiyah communities followed all over the country, resulting in the destruction of mosques and houses. These included attacks in Cianjur, West Java,⁴³ and in Mataram, Lombok, both in September 2005; in Leuwisadeng, Bogor, in January 2006;⁴⁴ in Ketapang, West Lombok, in February 2006;⁴⁵ in Central Lombok, in March 2006;⁴⁶ and in South Konawe, Southeastern Sulawesi, in April 2006.⁴⁷ Elsewhere local government authorities closed down Ahmadiyah mosques in Kuningan and Bogor, West Java.⁴⁸ Other groups were also harassed. Members of the Salamullah group in Jakarta led by Lia Aminuddin were arrested and charged with despoiling religion in

July 7–9, 2005, Bogor, organized by the IIAS (International Institute of Asian Studies) and PPIM UIN (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, Center for the Study of Islam and Society). According to Tayob, *fatawa* are meant to refer to general principles, whereas *hukm* refers to specific cases.

⁴⁰ "Gus Dur Tolak Fatwa MUI," *Duta Masyarakat*, July 30, 2005, p. 1; and "Gus Dur Tolak Fatwa MUI," *Jawa Pos*, July 30, 2005, p. 3.

⁴¹ "PBNU Minta Penutupan Tempat Ibadah Nonmuslim Dihentikan," *Harian Bangsa*, September 3, 2005, p. 10; "Kapolri Disomasi," *Harian Bangsa*, August 29, 2007, pp. 1, 11; and "Rohaniwan Katolik dan Protestan Temui FPI," *Kompas*, September 4, 2005, p. 2.

⁴² See: "Hard-liners Want JIL Evicted before Ramadhan," *The Jakarta Post*, September 8, 2005, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/yesterdaydetail.asp?fileid=20050908.A05>, accessed on August 30, 2007; and "FUI Tuntut JIL Dibubarkan Muspika Minta Warga Jangan Terprovokasi," <http://www.wahidinstitute.org/indonesia/content/view/188/54/>, accessed in August 2007.

⁴³ "Empat Perkampungan Ahmadiyah Diserang," *Jawa Pos*, September 21, 2005, p. 14; "Ahmadiyah Followers under More Pressure to Alter Beliefs," *The Jakarta Post*, September 22, 2005, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/yesterdaydetail.asp?fileid=20050923.A03>, accessed on March 9, 2009.

⁴⁴ "Rusak Masjid Ahmadiyah 5 Orang Ditahan," *Harian Bangsa*, January 9, 2006, p. 1.

⁴⁵ "Rumah Anggota Ahmadiyah Dibakar," *Harian Bangsa*, February 5, 2006, p. 1. "Ahmadiyah Lombok Barat ke Komnas HAM," *Jawa Pos*, February 11, 2006, p. 3.

⁴⁶ "Ahmadiyah Diserang," *Duta Masyarakat*, March 19, 2006, p. 1.

⁴⁷ "Depag Sultra Tidak Miliki Kewenangan Larang Ajaran Ahmadiyah," May 4, 2006, at <http://www.depag.go.id/index.php?menu=news&opt=detail&id=246>, accessed on August 30, 2007.

⁴⁸ "Kejati Mendata Aliran Kepercayaan," at <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/cetak/0304/29/0309.htm>, accessed on August 30, 2007.

December 2005 and January 2006.⁴⁹ In March 2006, in Probolinggo, East Java, a "heretical" individual named Dasur publicly "returned" to Islam after denying his previous beliefs under pressure from the local MUI, prosecutor's office, and police. His eight pages of heretical writings were publicly destroyed.⁵⁰ The local MUI said they would continue to monitor him. Xenophobic sentiments flowed freely. Heretics were said to be part of a conspiracy by "certain outside forces" to "discredit Islam."⁵¹

FROM OPPOSITION TO ALLIANCE: INSIDE MUI AND LPPI

The political synergy between MUI and the groups involved in violent attacks on "heretics" (LPPI and FPI) is worthy of further study. However, rather than focusing on the organizations, my approach will be to zoom in on two individuals involved in these groups. This enables one to dig deeper, exposing personal linkages as well as conjunctions in ideas and styles of behavior that may not be evident from organizational sources of information.

Pak S: The MUI Bureaucrat

Pak S has been involved in the MUI almost since its inception. At the provincial level, he has occupied various positions since 1977 and became the acting provincial general president (*ketua umum*) in 2000, assuming the formal position in December 2005. Born in 1943, he comes from a NU Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) background. While the previous leader of the MUI in this province was a recognized *kyai* (religious scholar), Pak S followed a career as a state bureaucrat.

After leaving his *pesantren*, he first spent some years as an independent missionary, and then most of his adult life as a provincial state functionary, occupied mainly in training other bureaucrats. He rose to become head of the provincial Education and Training department before retiring. Pak S told me that his mentor at the *pesantren*, Kyai R, always taught him it was not enough to be just a missionary; one needed to develop a business. Following this advice, Pak S established a general contracting and cleaning business, as well as businesses in agriculture. The *pesantren* at which he studied is noted in the area for its strong support for Golkar since the 1970s, and Pak S's career path therefore illustrates the tight connection between "traditionalist" Islam, business, and the state. His MUI position is thus not merely religious; it also places him at the center of an important nexus of elite power in the province. Other MUI figures at the central and provincial level have similar career paths. MUI was designed to embrace the whole Muslim community. Its various commissions consist of representatives from different Islamic and state organizations. In other words, MUI commissioners have already achieved various leadership positions in other organizations; some have been members of parliament, of the Human Rights Commission, of Golkar, and of other state bodies. These individuals constitute a religious, political, and socio-economic elite, and the

⁴⁹ "Lia Ngaku Malaikat Jibril," *Harian Bangsa*, December 29, 2005, p. 1.

⁵⁰ "Geger Aliran Sesat Dasur," *Duta Masyarakat*, March 18, 2006, p. 1; "MUI: Usut Ajaran Dasur," *Duta Masyarakat*, March 20, 2006, p. 1; and "Tobat, Dasur Baca Syahadat," *Jawa Pos*, March 22, 2006, at http://www.jawapos.co.id/index.php?act=detail_radar&id=120751&c=40, accessed in June 2007.

⁵¹ W. Hifdzy, "'Berdagang' Ajaran Sesat Lewat Pesantren," pp. 4-5.

network of their affiliations has changed little since the New Order. The former general president of MUI, Ali Yafie (1998–2000), spent sixteen years as a member of parliament prior to becoming MUI leader.⁵² The current (2009) vice-president and former general secretary of MUI, Din Syamsuddin, is a major Golkar figure, and, since 2006, general president of Muhammadiyah. Other MUI members are simultaneously aligned with political parties such as PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Justice Welfare Party) or PPP. An ex-PKS minister in the administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid, Nur Mahmudi Ismail, elected as the mayor of Depok in southern Jakarta in 2006, also served on MUI's *fatwa* commission.⁵³ Ma'ruf Amin, current head of the MUI *fatwa* commission, is a former member of parliament (from 1999–2004) for the PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, National Awakening Party) and also sits on Dewan Syariah, the NU advisory board.

MUI's establishment in the 1970s was hardly a democratic affair. Provincial governors were instructed to establish *ulama* councils, which were then, along with other Islamic groups, used to set up the national organization.⁵⁴ Pak S, however, pictured it as a more organic process, saying that the *kyai* (religious scholars) at the subdistrict level "got together" and established the local branches of MUI. Either way, whoever became a member of MUI at this local level depended on whatever friendships and connections existed among *kyai* and local bureaucrats. This elite structure, at once political and social, was maintained over time. The "charisma" of *pesantren* leadership that makes one eligible for MUI membership is usually inherited within families. In the central organization, too, those who have served as chairmen of the commission have nominated members of their families and former students for membership.⁵⁵

Pak S works in the provincial MUI headquarters, a run-down, one-story building in a pleasant tree-lined residential street. He also spends a lot of time at the extravagantly magnificent government-built mosque that is a major feature of the skyline in the southern part of his city, where he was also the director of education and training when I spoke with him. Pak S is a man accustomed to being respected, and he obviously likes to be shown the formal signs of respect. His way of speaking is calm yet authoritative. His commitment to his interpretation of religion is serious. He is well known for his firm insistence that his government trainees carry out regular prayers during his sessions. As I observed during our discussions, he often used linguistic tactics of control, such as talking over others and quoting long passages of bureaucratic jargon, as if still in the training classroom. He applied these tactics in his MUI relationships (as reported to me by others), including with his vice-chairman, and also with me when I interviewed him.

Ward Keeler shows that different performative styles among religious preachers in Java reveal how power is manifested in discourse.⁵⁶ The sermons of "traditionalist" preachers are entertaining, but at the same time patronizing and condescending to their audience, while the "prolix but un-accentuated" style of the

⁵² N. Hosen, "Behind the Scenes: Fatwas of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (1975–1998)," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 15, 2 (2004): 153.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*, p. 76.

⁵⁵ Hosen, "Behind the Scenes," p. 157.

⁵⁶ W. Keeler, "Style and Authority in Javanese Muslim Sermons," *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 9,2 (1998): 163–78.

"reformist" preachers is monologic. Not by chance, this "reformist style" is also that of state bureaucrats. When Keeler made his observations in 1987–88, this style of performance was becoming increasingly popular among many villagers since they associated it with the modern state and the urban elite, which they aspired to join. Although this style of public speech may seem boring and even oppressive to Westerners, it was popular because it did not patronize the listener, but instead left members of the audience with the impression that their status had been respected. Pak S's speech, both in pronunciation and style, resembles this state/reformist style rather than the entertaining, interactive approach many rural *kyai* commonly used in his province. Keeler writes:

Stylistic affinities between the ways in which speakers both religious and bureaucratic present themselves in Indonesia, that is, the ways in which they perform their roles, associate the two realms one with the other as a nexus of power.⁵⁷

This nexus is not just organizational or stylistic in the senses mentioned above, but also cultural and mental. Although Pak S speaks with pride of current MUI "independence" from the state, in his conversation, the boundaries between Islam and the state often become blurred. When I asked him why the local governor sits on the MUI advisory board, he claimed it was not because of his position as governor but because of his expertise. When asked to define the governor's particular expertise, Pak S answered "governing." (Admittedly, members of advisory boards in Indonesia do not generally have daily decision-making power but are mainly used to build legitimacy, like "patrons" of Western community organizations.) Pak S sees his own authority as deriving both from his skills and knowledge of Islamic law, and his consequent ability to represent Islamic groups before the government, as well as from his associations with the state. He is proud that various state bodies come to MUI for advice on Islamic issues, rather than going to NU, Muhammadiyah, or even the state's own Department of Religious Affairs. For Pak S, the *ulama* (religious leaders) in the MUI and the *umara* (state leaders) are united in preserving order. He thinks of MUI as a "partner" with the government. M. Hisyam's study of the *pangulu* (religious officials) in precolonial and colonial times shows the historical continuity of the alliance between the two, and their common concern for "order."⁵⁸ Under the Dutch, as under the precolonial sultanates and kingdoms, accommodation with civil authority was the rule. The fact that the Dutch were not Muslim created difficulties, but the *pangulu* saw their role as protecting the Islamic *umat* (community) by preserving social order. They generally supported government efforts to neutralize recalcitrant religious leaders.⁵⁹ This history, together with the New Order's deliberate conflation of political and religious dissidence,⁶⁰ has allowed Pak S to act in the present day against "heresy," in seamless continuity with a tradition that sees heresy as a threat to national security.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 175.

⁵⁸ M. Hisyam, *Caught Between Three Fires: The Javanese Pangulu Under The Dutch Colonial Administration, 1882–1942* (Jakarta: INIS, 2001).

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 90–93.

⁶⁰ Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*, pp. 80–81.

Suharto established the MUI to gain credibility among Muslims.⁶¹ However, the association between the New Order state bureaucracy and the MUI has gone on so long that MUI now claims special authority to deal with heresy and to define orthodoxy, an authority that, it says, extends even over other state institutions. About Ahmadiyah, Pak S told me:

MUI did, in fact, produce a *fatwa* about the Ahmadiyah problem in 1980, but finally confirmed it again at the seventh national meeting in July 2005, because, the lack of a firm attitude from the government through the attorney general's department will give rise to an anarchistic third party. We ask the attorney general's department to prohibit and freeze [Ahmadiyah] so that no one becomes anarchistic. We don't give a deadline, but don't leave it until that third party acts first, in any case Malaysia and Brunei have also prohibited Ahmadiyah.⁶²

Here the threat of "anarchy" is being used to pressure other state institutions to accept MUI's authority. The changing language of the MUI *fatawa* on Ahmadiyah over the years indicates a growing assertiveness. The original 1980 *fatwa* stated that Ahmadiyah was heretical, and that "in dealing with the problem of Ahmadiyah, MUI should always consult with the government." It thus asked for no specific action but expressed the implied hope that the government would do something. At a national meeting in 1984, MUI became a little braver and added to the *fatwa* a request that the government "reexamine" the letter issued by the Justice Department allowing Ahmadiyah to be a legal body.⁶³ Contemporary MUI language, by contrast, is strident. The organization's most recent *fatwa* asserts that "the government has the obligation to prohibit the spread of Ahmadiyah ideas in Indonesia and freeze their organization along with closing down their activities."⁶⁴ Ma'ruf Amin, the national chairman of MUI's *fatwa* commission, left no doubt about who was in charge: "Given the existence of this MUI *fatwa*, the government clearly has the obligation to prohibit [Ahmadiyah]. It's not us asking. Because there is a *fatwa* from MUI, the government is automatically obliged to prohibit them."⁶⁵ Whereas in the past MUI acted on behalf of the state, here it was asserting its own right to control political and religious dissidence. Note that it does not claim independence from the state, but rather claims priority over other state institutions. The New Order established MUI to tame the Muslim community, but now MUI apparently imagines that the rest of the state—police, prosecutors, government leaders—should automatically obey its dictates.

Under the New Order, one of the major functions of MUI was to regulate religion by controlling religious dissidence because of its potential to cause political problems.⁶⁶ The organization wielded the authority of the state and enjoyed backing

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 79.

⁶² "Ketua MUI Jatim: JAI Sudah Dilarang di 6 Wilayah," August 22, 2005 (reprinted from *Jawa Pos*), at http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/news.php?id=69, accessed in February 2009.

⁶³ The two separate *fatawa* are combined, as if they constituted a single ruling, under "Ahmadiyah Qadiyam" in the *fatwa* section of the MUI website. See http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/fatwa.php?id=33

⁶⁴ "Aliran Ahmadiyah," at http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/fatwa.php?id=131.

⁶⁵ "Majelis Ulama Menyoal Ahmadiyah," August 12, 2005 (reprinted from *Dialog Jumat*, a weekly supplement to *Republika* newspaper), at http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/news.php?id=65

⁶⁶ Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*, pp. 80–81.

from the courts, the attorney general's department, and the police. As Porter explained:

Although its main role was outlined as mediating the relations of Muslim society and the state, in reality MUI largely served as a vehicle for the dissemination of state values and ideas and functioned as an instrument of social management.⁶⁷

This repressive pattern still operated in the 2005 cases of the "heretics." Pak S certainly saw the anti-heresy campaign in classic New Order terms. "Anarchy" threatened the stability of the state and *therefore* the Muslim community. Now, however, MUI wished to pursue its social management function on its own terms, without interference from other organs of the state. In the current climate, this was a political move intended to shape a platform for expansion.

MUI has dropped New Order *Pancasila* discourse in favor of a moralistic Islam. Its current mission statement reads:

... to motivate the community institutional leadership effectively by promoting *ulama* as a model so that they are able to direct and guide the Islamic community in planting and fertilizing Islamic beliefs along with carrying out the *Shari'a*.⁶⁸

The ideological concerns of the *ulama* involved in MUI should not come as a surprise if one observes the signs in the MUI magazine, *Mimbar Ulama*, throughout the high New Order following MUI's founding in 1975. Despite the "guiding" influence from Suharto, two perennial issues continually reappeared in the MUI magazine: concerns about whether women were covering their bodies adequately, according to Islamic precepts, and concerns about heresies, both nominally Islamic and *kebatinan* varieties.⁶⁹

Although groups like MUI may have felt limited by circumstances during the New Order, they no doubt also gained by the association, particularly in terms of their role as representatives of state authority and legitimacy. At the same time, however, they maintained their own concerns, which occasionally surfaced in mild opposition to the regime. Consequently, in the post-Suharto environment, authoritarian New Order attitudes, practices, and organizational structures, such as MUI, are now being combined, not with the ideology of *Pancasila*, as under Suharto, but with calls for the legal implementation of *Shari'a* law.

The above context indicates a major shift in political discourse. Pak S, although he comes from a strong NU background, sees no problem in advocating a "return" to the *Shari'a*. For him, it is in line with the MUI mission and constitutes a form of "order" considered to be ideal. In his opinion, it is "the state" and MUI that have the

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 83.

⁶⁸ This appears on the MUI website—www.mui.or.id—under "Misi." It was repeated to me *verbatim* in the interview with Pak S.

⁶⁹ *Kebatinan*, or more formally, *aliran kepercayaan* (belief, currents trends), are overall terms referring to varieties of non-formal and non-standard forms of religion practiced in Java and other places in Indonesia. In the 1970s, Suharto backed a move to have them recognized as an official religion (*agama*), but Muslim opposition, largely from NU, forced him to backtrack, and in the end the Department of Culture was given the responsibility of regulating them. See M. van Bruinessen, "Indonesia's Ulama and Politics: Caught between Legitimising the Status Quo and Searching for Alternatives," *Prisma—The Indonesian Indicator* 49 (Jakarta, 1990): 52–69.

right and responsibility to ensure that order is maintained. In line with other MUI *ulama*, one of Pak S's major concerns appears to be young people's fashion and lifestyles, which show that things are "out of control" and society is increasingly unstable, thus making a "return to the *Shari'a*" attractive. He told me:

Indonesia is too over the top now, showing forbidden parts of the body. So we are concerned, and that our young people ... You ... if you look at the TV here, wah, it's already outside the limits. You can see ... you can see their navels and so on.

At the national meeting in Jakarta—I went to that, I went—and what became the most basic decision to overcome Indonesia's problems ... there is an arrangement, a way, a solution, a solution that we return to the *Shari'a*.⁷⁰

When I interviewed him in mid-2006, he still felt Indonesia was in crisis, a condition that contrasted with the stability of the Suharto era. One senses that his desire for a return to the *Shari'a* was shorthand for a return to the New Order *ulama-umara* alliance, but with the *Shari'a* rather than *Pancasila* as its ideological basis.

Pak A: The Anti-Heresy Campaigner

Pak A is the founder and leader of LPPI, a group established in Jakarta specifically to expose heresy. He is in his early fifties, although he looks older. He arrived in Jakarta in 1971 from his birthplace in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara. He chose not to become a state official, even though he had the opportunity because of his interest in organizational activities, Islamic study circles, and missionary activities. He was arrested and jailed four times under the New Order: twice for opposing the 1974 marriage law, once for opposing Suharto's attempt to have *kebatinan* recognized as a religion in 1978, and once in the 1980s for inviting an antigovernment preacher to his mosque.

A critical factor in shaping his religious understanding was his association with Mohammad Natsir, a former prime minister, who started his career as a member of the strict Islamic group Persis (Persatuan Islam, Islamic Union), and went on to lead the Masyumi party in the democratic period, and later led the DDII in the early New Order. Pak A himself was also in Persis. Federspiel, in his study of this organization, which was founded in 1923, describes Persis's self-appointed role of defining "true" Islam:

The Persatuan Islam ... was especially good at creating an Islamic ethos and at defining Islamic principles in clear terms. Other Muslim groups did this as well, usually in combination with other activities ... it is only that the Persatuan Islam made this activity its *raison d'être* ... Most of the effort of the organization was spent ... defining and justifying the positions it espoused ... it was the defining that was important, because as the members of the Persatuan Islam defined, it also forced others to define as well, and this was to play a certain beneficial, if also irksome, role in assisting the entire Indonesian community ... These tactics alienated a lot of other groups—traditionalists, Christians, nationalists,

⁷⁰ Personal Interview, June 5, 2006.

practitioners of folk Islam, and others who were attacked. Not even fellow modernists were spared their critique.⁷¹

Given this history, it is therefore not surprising that Pak A should be concerned about Ahmadiyah and heresy in general. Natsir offered him a scholarship to study in Saudi Arabia, but he did not accept it due to his desire to keep working on the issue of heresy. Pak A told me that his initial motivation arose when a missionary in his group went over to the "heretical" Ingkar Sunnah group. Working to expose this heresy then led Pak A to other heretical groups. He has tried since the early 1980s to involve the state in his struggle by asking for bans on various organizations, but with mixed success. His demonstrations are aimed both at encouraging state responses and at frightening the heretics. Pak A's style of politics emulates the Persis tactics mentioned above. He takes pride in having infiltrated various heretical organizations and taken on their members in debates. The polemical style of LPPI publications echoes that mandated by Persis's definitions of "correctness."

The headquarters of the struggle against heresy is a narrow shopfront in East Jakarta. The lower floor of the shop is a waiting room with some LPPI books for sale, as well as a large and imposing library of books in Arabic, gifts from the Saudi government. The LPPI office is on the upper floor, consisting of a sitting area in the usual Indonesian style, with a number of couches and a coffee table. The office is furnished with many large desks, covered with piles of papers, and many filing cabinets, obviously containing a large amount of material. According to Pak A, since 1997 two other people have been added to the staff and now assist him in his work.

Pak A is a small man who wears a goatee. He is an obsessive worker. His interests are so narrowly focused that it was difficult to discuss with him anything not related to heresy. He lives simply and appears to have no desire to promote himself or acquire money. His only signs of egoism are glimmers of pride in the success of his work. He dislikes heretics because, as he says, they think they are the most correct in their interpretations and perspectives, yet he appears to have the same attitude himself and is unable to see the contradiction. It also appeared important to him to claim that he, and not other groups, was responsible for organizing the attack on Ahmadiyah in Bogor. According to media reports, however, many other groups and individuals took part in this action and helped organize the attack.⁷²

Pak A talks about heretics in a fiery, argumentative, aggressive, and disparaging style. He is the type of person who tries to convince the listener by talking a lot and pointing his finger, as if the heretics were right there in front of him. He has accumulated and keeps a huge file of newspaper and magazine clippings on the people he considers to be heretics. During our interview, he constantly went to and fro among filing cabinets, pulling out display books containing collections of newspaper clippings, turning the pages and pointing his finger with anger and shock at each example of heresy. His accusations turn on divergences between the published beliefs of the heretics and what is written in the Qur'an or Hadith. However, it was not always easy to see how his chosen quotes from the Qur'an "proved" the heresy of those concerned. Most were very general verses that could

⁷¹ H. M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth-Century Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970), pp. 36–37, 189.

⁷² See "Marah Pada yang Diberkahi," *Gatra*, July 23, 2005.

give rise to many different interpretations. Pak A is also not averse to disparaging the personal lives of those he accuses of heresy.⁷³ LPPI publications similarly consist of a mishmash of newspaper clippings, confessions from disgruntled sect members, letters/statements/decisions by government officials, and *fatawa* from MUI or similar organizations, with little explanation to bind them all together. They could only be called “books” by virtue of appearing together inside a single cover. The documents often focus on the “mysterious” connections heretical groups have with powerful people or sources of wealth.⁷⁴ The style of writing is accusatory and disparaging, opponents are usually quoted out of context, and quotes from the Qur’an or Hadith are used as if their meaning were self-evident.

LPPI publications, mostly written by Pak A, focus on groups that most Muslims in Indonesia would probably agree are heretical. Among the targets are Ahmadiyah, the Indonesian Islamic Missionary Institute (Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia, LDII), Kadirun Yahya’s version of the Naqshabandiyah Sufi order, Shia Islam, Lia Aminuddin’s Salamullah group,⁷⁵ and the Al Zaytun *pesantren*,⁷⁶ which Pak A accuses of having links with the underground resistance movement Negara Islam Indonesia/Darul Islam (NII/DI).⁷⁷ However, in our discussions, he cast the net much wider. He attacked the liberal and quite mainstream Islamic scholar Nurcholis Madjid, influential in the renewal of Islam in the later New Order period and well-known for his slogan “Islam Yes, Islamic Party No.” Other LPPI writers have written against Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest and most traditionalist Islamic organization in Indonesia, and against the television preacher Aa Gym (Abdullah Gymnastiar), whose immense popularity among the emerging urban middle class at the time (post-New Order) resulted from his readiness to speak of the feelings and the spirit—instead of just the rules—of Islam.⁷⁸

Other aspects of Pak A’s politics are his Saudi connections and anti-Chinese attitude. In addition to accumulating a large collection of books given to him by the

⁷³ Ehrman notes “the stereotyped charges of moral impropriety leveled with surprising frequency against heretical opponents.” B. D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York, NY, and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 16.

⁷⁴ Strangely enough, in an interview published by *Hidayatullah* magazine, Pak A admits to receiving money himself, when he was sick in the hospital, from an “unexpected source” that supported his efforts; no further explanation is given. See “HM Amin Djamaluddin LPPI Benteng Aqidah Ummat, Musuh Aliran Sesat,” at <http://www.hidayatullah.com/>, last accessed 2006, no longer online.

⁷⁵ See J. Howell, “Muslims, the New Age, and Marginal Religions in Indonesia: Changing Meanings of Religious Pluralism,” *Social Compass* 52,4 (2005): 473–93, published by Sage for the Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions, Leuven, Belgium.

⁷⁶ See “Al Zaytun,” <http://www.indonesiamatters.com/1052/al-zaytun/>, accessed on August 30, 2007.

⁷⁷ See U. Abduh, *Membongkar Gerakan Sesat NII Di Balik Pesantren Mewah Al Zaytun* (Jakarta: LPPI, 2001); M. A. Djamaluddin, *Ahmadiyah & Pembajakan Al-Qur’an* (Jakarta: LPPI, 1992); M. A. Djamaluddin, *Penyimpangan & Kesesatan Ma’had Al Zaytun* (Jakarta: LPPI 2001); M. A. Djamaluddin, *Melacak Kesesatan & Kedustaan Ajaran Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Prof. Dr. Kadirun Yahya M.Sc.* (Jakarta: LPPI, 2001); H. M. A. Djamaluddin, *Kesesatan Lia Aminuddin & Agama Salamullahnya* (Jakarta: LPPI, 2004); H. M. C. Shodiq, *Akar Kesesatan LDII dan Penipuan Triliunan Rupiah* (Jakarta: LPPI, 2004).

⁷⁸ See A. Al-Mukaffi, *Rapot Merah AA Gym* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 2003); H. A. Jaiz and A. Z. Akaha, *Bila Kyai Dipertuhankan: Membedah Sikap Beragama NU* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2001); and H. A. Jaiz, *Apa Itu Salafi?* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 2004).

Saudis, he has been invited on the *hajj* twice at the cost of the Saudi government. Two of his sons have received scholarships from the same source.⁷⁹ S. K. Aburish, in his study of the Saudi royal family, points out that the Saudis, through the World Muslim League, often support extremists at the fringes of the Muslim world in order to confirm their credentials as leaders of that world, while at the same time repressing identical extremisms at home.⁸⁰ Although Pak A claims that his main concern is with heresy within Islam, he has also aimed critiques at other religious groups, as when he opposed President Abdurrahman Wahid's official acknowledgement of the Chinese Confucian religion and when he spoke out against Christians and groups such as the Bahai.

Under the New Order, people such as Pak A had little influence, although there were a few sporadic attacks on groups accused of heresy. In the current freer climate, however, links have been established between relatively conventional Muslim organizations and action-focused groups like FPI, which can mobilize large numbers of demonstrators at short notice. Although FPI has its own agenda of protesting against nightclubs, cafes, gambling, and prostitution, it is also happy to help out other groups when asked.⁸¹ This is how FPI members became involved in the attack on Ahmadiyah in Bogor.

It is a sign of the times that Pak A is now also a member of central MUI. MUI asked him to join in July 2005, when the campaign against heretics was first gaining steam, following the MUI-organized Fourth Indonesian Islamic Community Congress. This is the organizational side of the ideological synergy between MUI and once marginal groups such as LPPI and FPI, mentioned earlier. Pak A's co-option is just one of many new linkages established among groups within the state/elite complex and people of whom Suharto once disapproved. During the New Order, the MUI magazine, *Mimbar Ulama*, often advised preachers how to avoid getting into "trouble" with the state.⁸² Now Pak A, who used to invite antigovernment speakers to his mosque, is allied with those who previously saw him as a source of trouble. MUI clearly finds Pak A to be a useful addition to its armory.

VIOLENCE AS A MECHANISM TO GENERATE ISSUES

We have seen earlier how MUI used the threat of "anarchy" to create an ideological synergy with groups conducting violent attacks on heretics. While it officially disapproved of violence, its "solution" to each incident was to ban the group that had been attacked rather than punish the attackers. This tactic opened political space for more attacks. Radical groups, it could be argued, justify their existence by their ability to create "issues" largely through violence. Violence creates publicity. FPI's innovation is to fill the niche between an ideology and "action." It attracts members with its possibilities of action, while its more "moderate" allies can simply excuse excesses by claiming that it is difficult for those in charge to maintain

⁷⁹ "HM Amin Djamaluddin LPPI Benteng Aqidah Ummat, Musuh Aliran Sesat," at <http://www.hidayatullah.com/>, last accessed 2006, no longer online.

⁸⁰ S. K. Aburish, *The Rise, Corruption, and Coming Fall of the House of Saud* (London: Bloomsbury, 1995).

⁸¹ A. Purnomo, *FPI Disalapahami* (Jakarta: Mediatama Indonesia, 2003).

⁸² For an example, see *Mimbar Ulama* 51 (September–October, 1981).

control over their members once the action has started.⁸³ Action groups such as FPI, with its attacks on cafes, and LPPI, with its attacks on heretics, gain support by creating an endless chain of issues that need to be fought for. An atmosphere of crisis prevails, and the existential conflict between Islam and non-Islam pushes towards center stage. MUI stands to gain from this shift in the public agenda towards authoritarian religious conservatism.

Heresy is particularly fruitful for those seeking to generate issues, since new heretics can be manufactured by shifting the public discourse regarding what defines true Islam. Violence gives the shift urgency. The hope is that the public will respond by assuming that the attack itself proves the guilt of the accused and that the accused parties would not be attacked unless there were something wrong with them. Pak S and Pak A both used this type of reasoning. Asked about violent action against heretics, Pak S told me the heretics were the problem, not the violence deployed in attacking them:

If you talk about violence, there must be those who give rise to the violence. That's right isn't it? ... Why is there violence? Because there are people who ruin, ruin beliefs. This is sensitive, to ruin beliefs is sensitive.

It's like this. FPI, from the perspective of teachings ... because they [FPI] are correct in beliefs, they are correct according to Islam. But if they [FPI] are violent, MUI does not agree with violence, because MUI applies an approach of *tasamuh*, tolerance, so ... But they [FPI], from the perspective of teachings, do not diverge, they can still be guided. Only this, people must understand there is violence because of another factor that provokes them. When there are people who ruin Islam [e.g., Ahmadiyah], they [FPI] arise, these hard ones. But MUI, though we arise, but in a normal way, not physical, but they [FPI], if they already have a character like that ... Defender's Front, their name is Defender's Front, after all. So now, if they [e.g., Ahmadiyah, the government] don't want them to often act, yeah, the other side shouldn't make a problem. So there is a reason then why a problem arises, isn't there?⁸⁴

Likewise Pak A, in a meeting with the local subdistrict chief in the Bogor area before the attack on Ahmadiyah, claimed that the problem lay with the heretics:

I said to the subdistrict chief, please, the community is upset, this isn't a new problem, from the '80s the community has already protested, so the enmity is already strong. I said to the subdistrict chief, this will be a big fuss. If you want your area peaceful, close down the Ahmadiyah congress ... The Ahmadiyah leader was at that meeting. Ahmadiyah answered, that Abdul Basyid [representative of Ahmadiyah, answered]: "In line with our human rights as Ahmadiyah people, we will continue our congress." I answered, I spoke: "In line with the human rights of the community who own that village," I said, "the community will disperse your congress. We both have rights." Then I said, "Frankly, if I tell the community that there hasn't been a decision [to close down

⁸³ A. Purnomo, *FPI Disalapahami*.

⁸⁴ Personal interview, June 5, 2006.

the congress], how can I prohibit them [from taking violent action], for after all, it's their village ...⁸⁵

Pak S similarly blamed the violence on "mass psychology," as if it were perfectly natural for violence to erupt as a result of large gatherings. He then conveniently claimed that there was no need to make a *fatwa* against violence:

It's already understood. It would be ridiculous to make a *fatwa* for every instance of violence. It's impossible, isn't it, *fatawa* are general, and people already understand that you are not allowed to destroy. It's already understood, isn't it? It's already law, not allowed. "Don't riot on the face of the earth," the verse is already clear. Without a *fatwa*, people already know it all. If we produce *fatawa* against people on a case-by-case basis, it wouldn't be sacred, that's not the way ...⁸⁶

The violent action by radical groups resonates with an Indonesian history of righteous popular anger. Even Indonesians not close to these groups sometimes believe that violence serves as evidence of a commitment and a seriousness in struggling for noble ideals. A *Kompas* survey indicates that popular support for violent attacks by groups such as FPI varies greatly depending on the targets of the attacks.⁸⁷ While most people polled disapproved of violent action in general, 45.8 percent were relatively tolerant of attacks on nightclubs and places selling alcohol, whereas only 27 percent tolerated attacks on places of worship. This survey underlines the normalization of violence in the Indonesian community. Violence is broadly seen as regrettable but understandable.⁸⁸ The use of violence by a group does not necessarily invalidate its ideas. Pak S, the lifelong pious bureaucrat, feels a sense of brotherhood with groups such as FPI and LPPI because he perceives that their beliefs match his. In that context, their violence is understandable and even acceptable. They are only attacking "deviants," who need to be repressed. Their tactics may be misguided but their ideals are noble. If blame is to be assigned, it should focus on those whose ideas are unacceptable, not on the form of action taken against them.

When the public comes to believe that violent attacks against heretics prove heretics to be the problem, and it accepts MUI's ideological confirmation of that proof, public discourse shifts in a more conservative direction. MUI positions itself judiciously within the publicity associated with the attacks, and it hopes that, as a result, its authoritarian conservatism will come to be seen as more representative of Islam than the relatively tolerant approach espoused by the preoccupied mainstream and the weak liberals. MUI also tries to position itself, and be perceived, as more moderate than the violent gangs and as more independent than any pro-government group. MUI *fatawa* bracketing liberals and heretics is intended to paint liberals as extreme, not moderate. Conversely, according to this narrative, radicals, rather than being recognized as extreme, are perceived as simply misguided and, underneath

⁸⁵ Personal interview, June 5, 2006.

⁸⁶ Personal interview, June 5, 2006.

⁸⁷ "Keresahan di Balik Ormas," *Kompas*, June 19, 2006, p. 4.

⁸⁸ See B. Welsh, *Patterns of Vigilante Violence in Indonesia*, USINDO Brief, <http://www.usindo.org/Briefs/2003/Vigilante%20Violence%2004-15-03.htm>, accessed on May 19, 2005.

their rough exterior, as upholders of the standard religion. The extent to which that standard has changed since the New Order period is left unexamined and unmentioned.

THE STATE, THEN AND NOW

During the year following July 2005, Ahmadiyah was attacked in various ways in different places throughout Indonesia, as detailed above. The state apparatus usually responded by prohibiting Ahmadiyah or limiting their activities. Some individual heretics were imprisoned and small, locally based groups closed down. If any attackers were arrested, those detained were usually participants and not the leaders. Punishments were light.⁸⁹ On the other hand, despite demands from the antiheresy groups, no Ahmadiyah followers were arrested and charged with “despoiling religion.” In other areas, where no attacks have taken place, Ahmadiyah still freely carries out its activities. There has been no move to legislate a national prohibition against the organization. Confusion concerning which levels of government are chiefly responsible for dealing with such issues has perhaps contributed to the paralysis. Central authorities have left it up to local ones to take action, while the latter often refused to act without approval from the center or from MUI.⁹⁰ The variety of state responses raises questions about the consistency and coherence of the Indonesian state as an institution. Legally there is a conflict between New Order laws on despoiling religion and the human rights legislation introduced in 1999, yet neither form of legislation has been consistently applied.

It would be a mistake to view this indecisiveness as a sign that state capacities have been seriously weakened since the New Order. Suharto’s successful imposition of *Pancasila* on all social organizations, and his sometimes brutal repression of opposition, created the impression that he ruled over an efficient and extremely repressive totalitarian state. This picture was reinforced by the work of New Order ideologues such as Moerdiono,⁹¹ who drew on the philosophical notions of “integralism” that Supomo had earlier idealized for the state. However, a totalitarian ideology does not automatically create a working totalitarian state. Although authoritarian, the New Order state was never totalitarian in the sense of having total power over society. A perceptive reading of New Order history shows that Suharto survived as president only by a constant and complex process of negotiation with other interest groups and networks in society. Among the various Islamic groups was MUI, whose members, as Porter wrote, “participate politically as they seek to

⁸⁹ For example, in Cianjur attackers were given four-month sentences.

⁹⁰ “Aliran Kepercayaan di NTB Masih Kondusif,” at <http://www.suarantb.com/2006/04/11/Sosial/xdetil2.htm>, accessed on August 30, 2007; “Depag Sultra Tidak Miliki Kewenangan Larang Ajaran Ahmadiyah,” May 4, 2006, at <http://www.depag.go.id/index.php?menu=news&opt=detail&id=246>, accessed on August 30, 2007; “Kejati Mendata Aliran Kepercayaan,” at <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/cetak/0304/29/0309.htm>, accessed on August 30, 2007; and “Pembubaran Ahmadiyah, Kejaksaan Tunggu Presiden,” July 28, 2005, at <http://hukumonline.com/detail.asp?id=13272&cl=Berita>, accessed in June 2007.

⁹¹ Moerdiono, “Paham Integralistik: Bukan Liberalisme dan Bukan Komunisme,” in *Pancasila sebagai Ideologi dalam Berbagai Bidang Kehidupan Bermasyarakat, Berbangsa dan Bernegara*, ed. O. Oesman and Alfian (Jakarta: BP-7 Pusat, 1992).

fulfill their own goals in addition to those of the authorities."⁹² Suharto even negotiated with some heretical groups. A strategy of official disapproval combined with unofficial approval helped Suharto to build his support.⁹³

Despite its appearance of wielding total power and control, the New Order survived by a combination of arbitrary and intermittent repression, divide-and-rule tactics, patronage, and constant negotiation among participating groups. Suharto stood at the center of a large number of networks. With no dominant leader in the post-Suharto period, intra-elite competition, previously contained within the boundaries of the state, has become more visible. The elite suddenly appear fragmented by conflicts of interest.⁹⁴ With no strict division between state and society, and between public and private, competing elite groups use various organizations, both formal state and non-state bodies, in order to build their power and mobilize public support.

While competing with each other, these coalitions or networks of interest are themselves continually subject to renegotiation, both internally and externally. Their boundaries are ever flexible. This notion helps explain the much less predictable character of politics in Indonesia today compared to during the New Order. Yet today's increasingly visible elite competition and mass mobilization should not be interpreted as new phenomena, for much of this unpredictability originated in New Order practices. Authoritarian habits, politics based on clientelistic networks, and the use of scapegoating and violence as part of a political strategy all have long histories in Indonesia.

Other political networks in Indonesia are no doubt utilizing similar strategies. But the development of the post-New Order Islamic nexus led by MUI, combined with gradual *Shari'atization* and attacks on heretics, is arguably one of the better examples of a process by which many former New Order figures have managed to reclaim lost territory. By allying with thuggish elements (known as *preman*⁹⁵) and formerly marginal groups, they are increasingly driving politics in an authoritarian

⁹² D. J. Porter, "Citizen Participation through Mobilization and the Rise of Political Islam in Indonesia," *The Pacific Review* 15,2 (2002): 227.

⁹³ The LDII were banned by the government under pressure from groups such as LPPI but kept reappearing under different names, of which LDII is the latest. Pak A claims the LDII negotiated its survival during the New Order by supporting Golkar in elections. Personal interview, Jakarta, July 1, 2006. This organization's alleged survival strategy is also mentioned in LPPI publications. See, for example, H. M. C. Shodiq, *Akar Kesesatan LDII dan Penipuan Triliunan Rupiah* (Jakarta: LPPI, 2004). This claim was backed up by others in the Islamic community, including Pak S. (personal interview, June 5, 2006). In November 2006, LDII was in the process of applying for membership in MUI by claiming that its members had changed their beliefs. See "MUI Tangguhkan Pengakuan Terhadap LDII," November 22, 2006, at http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/news.php?id=103, accessed in March 2009. At the same time, representatives of LDII also signed statements in support of the anti-pornography law being promoted by MUI. In March 2007, however, MUI issued a statement forbidding its members to be present at LDII events and said it was awaiting news from the regions as to whether members of LDII had changed their exclusive behavior before taking any further action. See "Pengurus dan Anggota MUI Dilarang Hadiri Acara LDII," at http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/news.php?id=143, accessed in March 2009.

⁹⁴ For a concise summary of the situation, see V. Wee, *Will Indonesia Hold? Past, Present, and Future in a Fragmenting State*, Working Papers Series no. 4 (Hong Kong: Southeast Asia Research Centre, City University of Hong Kong, 2002), pp. 12–14.

⁹⁵ *Preman* can be variously translated as petty criminal, stand-over-man, hoodlum, hooligan, and so on.

direction. The legal enforcement in various localities of the religious *Shari'a*, which has no widely accepted, canonical form among religious scholars and is thus open to manipulation, vastly increases the potential number of scapegoats who can be turned into objects in order to generate inflammatory issues. As the standard form of religion moves closer to uniformity in pursuit of an idealized vision of the *Shari'a*, more heretics are created, thus providing a continual flow of support for the groups that support the formalization of the *Shari'a* (despite public ignorance of what *Shari'a* actually means). The resulting fear leads to enforced uniformity in the field of religion and beyond it.

It is not a foregone conclusion that the transition to democracy leads to a more open and tolerant society. The process may instead produce social and cultural authoritarianism and even more exclusionary practices towards minorities, compared with the *modus operandi* of a dictatorship. This authoritarianism, combined with clientelistic practices such as corruption and favoritism in the relationships between state and non-state actors, may mean that Indonesian state and society may not become more Islamized, as widely hoped, but rather more criminalized, particularistic, selective, and arbitrary, exacerbating the many inequalities in the nation that already exist.

READING POLITICS FROM A BOOK OF DONATIONS: THE MORAL ECONOMY OF THE POLITICAL CLASS IN SUMBA

Jacqueline Vel¹

... [F]ar from deteriorating, the African state (like its post-Communist equivalents and others) is becoming stronger through the hold enjoyed by political personnel and actors associated with the state on a large part of the informal economy (embezzlement, fraud, criminal economy) and the formal economy (privatization, holdings, etc.). Even if the activities involved here are not officially state activities, but very personal “business” carried out by the agents of the state and their friends, all of these “private” activities of the political class in the widest sense are “attributed” to this new type of state, which, as a result, is increasingly invading society as a whole.²

When I went to Sumba in August 2006, with questions about the character of the state on this Indonesian island in mind, I suspected from previous work that the situation would be comparable to that described in the Africa-related quote above. I knew that regional autonomy resulting from national decentralization policies since 1999 had changed the context for state officials in the districts. Instead of simply obeying orders “from above,” they had considerable freedom to implement policies and decide how to spend the district’s budget. The direct-election law of 2004 ensured that district chiefs and those who owed their jobs to them began to pay more attention to local issues and voters and less to their bureaucratic superiors in Jakarta. Candidates for political offices focused their minds on district problems, and

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² Giorgio Blundo and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *Everyday Corruption and the State: Citizens and Public Officials in Africa* (London and New York, NY: Zed Books, 2006), p. 109.

discussed them at election rallies. Local businessmen sponsored their campaigns. Politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen, and civil society leaders created links beyond the existing networks of kinship and religious affiliation. The common denominator among the members of these political networks was that they all in some way derived their income primarily from the state. This is what made them a class apart in Sumba—a “political class.” The state in Sumba is the main provider of salaried employment, and the state budget is the main pillar of the monetary economy. These assertions, which all needed to be substantiated, led me to wonder whether the *values* that drove action within these locally rooted networks might be as important—as deeply rooted in Sumba—as were the relationships among the participants. Rather than a bureaucracy operating strictly by legal-rational rules, would I find within Sumba’s political class a moral economy—a set of internal norms and rules of conduct—that strongly influenced how the state operates and how officials make their decisions?

In August 2006 I was looking for evidence that might substantiate my suspicion that decentralization was (re)establishing a local political class, with its own internalized rules of conduct. When I heard about a substantial donation that the Golkar candidate for the 2008 provincial gubernatorial elections had given for the construction of a large church building in a small town in West Sumba, it struck me that this may have been an example of those “private activities” of the political class that serve political ends. Neither the size of this individual donation—25 million rupiah (US\$2,500)—nor the size of the church made sense to me, except as symbols of status and power, attributes of the political class.³

In Waibakul, the village where the church was being built, I heard that the church congregation was organizing a large feast, to be held in September 2006. It was former District Chief Umbu Djima’s idea, as chairman of the building committee. The invitation announced a special service during which at least ten couples would have their marriages consecrated and a large number of children would be baptized. With around fifteen hundred official members, the congregation in Waibakul is considered small in the intensely Christian island of Sumba. The church council classifies 60 percent of its church members as poor. But the feast would be large, with many officials—including Sumba’s two district chiefs—and businessmen invited from all over Sumba. Umbu Djima calculated this would be a perfect occasion to get all invitees to donate lavishly to the new church, so that the last part of his one billion rupiah budget would be funded. Why, I wanted to know, was so much money being spent on a conspicuous church building in such a poor area? What were the interests of those who donated? Could this incident teach me something about the post-1998 state in Sumba?

To answer that last question, this chapter takes a rather wide detour. It begins by investigating some fundamental anthropological characteristics of Sumbanese society that provide the context in which state officials function. To assess the value of donations to the church, it is necessary to know about the traditional gift-exchange practices that serve to cement the bonds between the clans that traditionally formed the basis of this agrarian society. In pre-colonial times, leadership was exercised by clan leaders who competed with each other. Besides waging war to demonstrate

³ I explain this concept later in the essay.

superiority, they competed by showing off their wealth and status. Investing in status symbols was regarded as investing in the power of the whole clan.

To understand how Sumbanese today imagine the modern state and how the contemporary political class emerged in Sumba, it is necessary to explore the historical forces that shaped both the image of what the state is, and the social composition of its local elites. This chapter's second section on state formation will show that the colonial government introduced a hybrid version of the modern state in Sumba by selecting some of the traditional leaders to become *raja* (kings) who could act as intermediaries between the government and the population. Christianity was introduced on the island along with the colonial state. It played an important role in providing modern education, with the result that well-educated Sumbanese today are all Christians (Protestant Christian or Catholic). The Christian church is also an institution that can connect people from various ethnic groups with each other, for example, Sumbanese politicians and Chinese businessmen.

One key reason why the state is so important in Sumba is that its budget finances a large part of the domestic economy. For Sumbanese who want to escape low-yielding agriculture, the state is the main provider of salaried employment. In the third section, I provide statistical data that show the level of poverty in Sumba compared to other parts of Indonesia.

Throughout this chapter, I study the state through the everyday practices of its officials,⁴ as individuals with both private and formal identities. The members of the network connecting many political-cum-personal cliques constitute the political class. This includes the high-level executives currently in office, but it also embraces others capable of influencing the allocation of state resources: (some) retired state officials, businessmen, political party bosses, clan leaders, religious leaders, and the wives and mothers of all these influential men. The fourth section explains the concept of political class as well as the other parts of the socio-political stratification.

Analyzing the state in terms of networks requires a description of those networks' rules of access, of communication, and of members' upward mobility. I use Pierre Bourdieu's "forms of capital"⁵ as a theoretical framework for explaining this. The "forms of capital" concept sensitizes us to the ingredients of power. Positions of power cannot be bought with economic wealth only—they also require status and authority that can be either inherited or achieved through education and special skills. Sustaining such positions, then, requires a strong supportive social network, or "social capital," according to Bourdieu. Looking at the political class as a network with a hierarchy based on the accumulation of various forms of capital opens the way to understanding why donations to a church building can be politically useful. This chapter's fifth section explains this approach and applies it to the life history of the chairman of the church building committee, Umbu Djima.

Gaining access to the political class and moving up within it is a process of accumulating power, wealth, and prestige. State officials buttress their authority with highly context-specific status symbols. Of the many status symbols in Sumba,

⁴ Migdal suggested analyzing the state both at the level of officials' daily practices, and at the level of discursive analysis, through its "image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory." See Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 15–16.

⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 241–59.

the large tombstone was traditionally the ultimate form. After their death, prominent rulers were buried in elaborate, ostentatious tombs. In the sixth section, on status in a (post-) megalithic culture, I explain how a new church building can be seen as a modern, Christian expression of megalithic culture.

Next, the chapter returns to the story of the church building in Waibakul and profiles several of the people who donated to its construction. Here I connect the background text to individuals' behavior to explain the gift-giving motivations of those unrelated to either the congregation or the church-building committee's chairman, Umbu Djima. The committee's book of donations records the relationships Umbu Djima maintained within various political and social networks. He effectively transformed these connections into economic capital and status. How did he motivate the donors to pay? The seventh section describes the interests involved. In the last section I interpret the data from the book of donations in terms of what I call the "moral economy of the political class." That moral economy also involved rules of exclusion. The downside of the formation of a political class is that the majority of citizens, who do not belong, are underserved by the state. Access to government services has essentially been privatized. When every step in a bureaucratic process costs money, only those with money can gain access to state services. Finally, in the conclusion I return to the general questions regarding the character of the state in Indonesia after 1998.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EXCHANGE PRACTICES

Sumba is located 400 kilometers east of Bali, south of Flores, and northwest of Australia. It is a relatively large island of 11,500 square kilometers, being 200 kilometers long and from 36 to 75 kilometers wide. Administratively, Sumba belongs to the province Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) and is divided into two districts (*kabupaten*): East and West Sumba. East Sumba—with its district capital, Waingapu—is sparsely populated. Traditionally, its economy combined keeping livestock with subsistence agriculture. The nobility owned large herds of horses, water buffalos, and cattle, while the lower ranks herded the animals and cultivated food crops. The East Sumbanese feudalistic social structure fits the landscape, climate, and subsistence economy. In West Sumba, relative to its eastern counterpart, the population density is higher, and society is less feudalistic, especially in Kodi and Waijewa.⁶ Waibakul, where the elaborate church was being built, is located in Central Sumba, which is linguistically and socially similar to East Sumba. In 2006, Sumba's population was nearly 600,000, with more than 90 percent being ethnic Sumbanese. The Sumbanese make sub-ethnic distinctions according to domain of origin. Rodney Needham described the characteristics of a domain on Sumba:

The integrating force within a domain is the hegemony of the main village and of the leading clan of that village. This clan owed its power to its ancestral spirits and the

⁶ Janet A. Hoskins, "So My Name Shall Live: Stone-Dragging and Grave-Building in Kodi, West-Sumba," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 142,1 (1986): 31–51.

unity of the district or domain was manifested in the attendance at sacrifices and ceremonies performed at the main village by the dominant clan.⁷

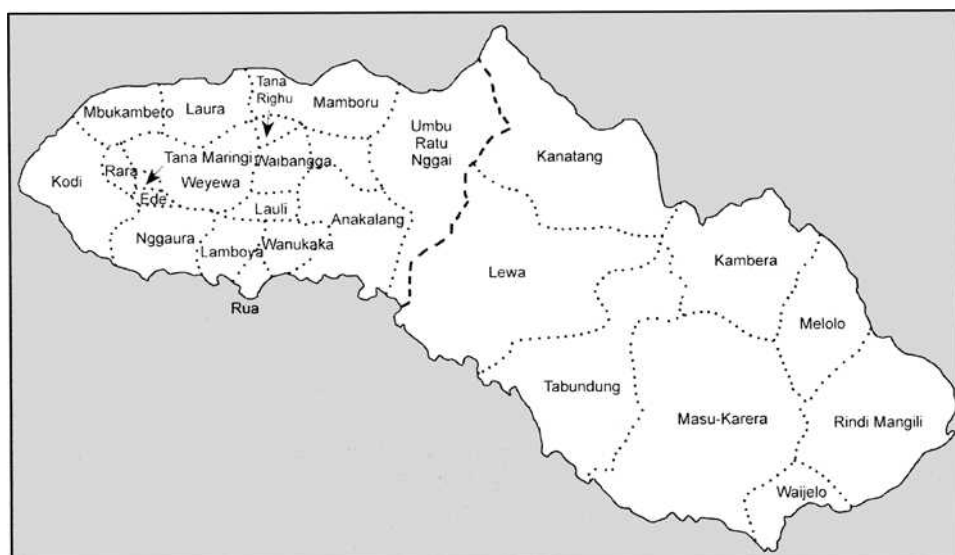


Figure 1
Traditional Domains on Sumba⁸

Taro Goh registered sixteen domains in West Sumba and eight in East Sumba.⁹ Ancestry was the unifying principle. From the earliest accounts on,¹⁰ Sumba is described as an island troubled with permanent internal warfare. It appears there was strong enmity among the domains.¹¹ The object of warfare was to capture food, horses, and people. The sharp borders drawn on the maps of traditional domains are imaginary, because a domain is defined by its center and not by its borders.¹² At present, Sumbanese still make sub-ethnic distinctions according to their traditional domain of origin, which can be used to anchor political identities.

Relations among the clans are expressed in terms of marriage alliances: clan A is bride-giving to clan B, which in turn provides brides for clan C, and so forth. This is known as a system of asymmetric prescriptive alliance.¹³ In this pattern of bride exchange, the flow of women is accompanied by a flow of “female objects” like

⁷ Rodney Needham, *Mambaru: History and Structure in a Domain of Northwestern Sumba* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 8.

⁸ Map reproduced with permission from Jacqueline A. C. Vel, *Uma Politics: An Ethnography of Democratization in West Sumba, Indonesia, 1986–2006* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008), p. 61.

⁹ Taro Goh, *Sumba Bibliography* (Canberra: The Australian National University, 1991), p. xii.

¹⁰ See Kruseman (1836), cited in Janet A. Hoskins, *The Play of Time: Kodi Perspectives on Calendars, History, and Exchange* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), p. 44.

¹¹ Hoskins, *The Play of Time*, p. 44.

¹² Needham, *Mambaru*, p. 6.

¹³ Gregory L. Forth, *Rindi—An Ethnographic Study of a Traditional Domain in Eastern Sumba* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), p. 282.

hand-woven cloths, ornaments, and pigs. There is also a counter flow of “male objects,” typically horses, buffalos, and golden pendants. Clan relationships determine an individual’s identity to an important degree. They prescribe proper conduct in relationships with others, such as the type of gift that should be presented at ceremonial events.

Material exchanges confirm social relations. Reciprocity is a crucial element in Sumbanese economic morality.¹⁴ Both between and within clans, the terms of the transaction depend on the relationship. Brothers should share their possessions, but at the other end of the spectrum of reciprocity, Sumbanese raise no objection against stealing from strangers, who are considered potential enemies.

The smallest unit in Sumbanese traditional social systems is the “Uma.” This is the Sumbanese word for house as a physical structure, and for the group of people connected to that house. Identification with specific houses connects people to the histories of those houses and their related objects—heirlooms, bones, graves—through which people trace connections to each other and to the landscape.¹⁵ Uma members do not necessarily reside in the house, but they will always come back to it to perform their rituals, especially those marking the transitions of marriage and death. The members of an Uma share a relationship of general reciprocity, which means that they can always ask for help (whether moral or material) and stay and eat at each other’s houses. Outsiders can be incorporated in an Uma, as fictive kin, after performing the necessary rituals and demonstrating their willingness to obey the rules of reciprocity. The construction of a church—the house of the Lord—is regarded in this traditional way. Those who contribute substantially are, so to say, members of the Lord’s Uma. Generalized reciprocity would be proper conduct among the Lord’s Uma’s members. Relations of generalized reciprocity are characterized by assistance, loyalty, and support.

A traditional leader will be classified locally in terms of his position in the kinship structures, his social rank, and his traditional domain of origin. Kinship structures along the patrilineal line create hierarchies within a domain, with layers according to rank. The highest rank is that of the nobility. The highest individual position is for the “oldest brother” among the Uma’s noblemen who can trace the shortest connection to the main founding father of the domain. Lower members of the same hierarchy form a natural constituency for the leader. Nevertheless, personal characteristics such as eloquence and cleverness can make a person more powerful than his position in the kinship hierarchy would imply. Apart from these traditional and personal attributes, other attributes may also come into play, as happened when state formation and Christianity introduced leadership criteria that came to serve as alternatives to the traditional system of leadership and conduct.

¹⁴ Jacqueline Vel, “The Uma Economy: Indigenous Economics and Development Work in Lawonda, Sumba (Eastern Indonesia)” (PhD dissertation, Wageningen University, 1994), pp. 63–65.

¹⁵ S. D. Gillespie, “Beyond Kinship, an Introduction,” in *Beyond Kinship: Social and Material Reproduction in House Societies*, ed. R. A. Joyce and S. D. Gillespie (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 16.

THE HISTORY OF STATE FORMATION AND INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY

Today's image of the state, as perceived by Sumbanese, is at least partly rooted in Sumba's history of governance.¹⁶ There was no pre-colonial central state. The traditional polity was based on kinship and rank; leadership was confined to members of noble houses. During the nineteenth century, Sumba became incorporated into the emerging Netherlands-Indies state. In 1845, Resident Sluyter, from Kupang, signed a contract with several prominent Sumbanese leaders, in which they acknowledged Dutch authority. Gold and silver staffs symbolized their appointment as *raja* or *bestuurder* (ruler) and *raja kecil* or *onderbestuurder* (subruler).¹⁷ Colonial indirect rule enhanced patrimonialism by appointing only one individual among each domain's *maramba* (noble leaders) as *raja*, the domain's highest local leader.¹⁸

The *raja* was expected to combine traditional leadership and compliance with the colonial state's normative order. The colonial government put the *rajas* of domains into a larger structure, and this created a new hierarchy.

State and Christianity are closely related on Sumba. While Dutch colonial government brought a central state to Sumba, European missionaries introduced a world religion.¹⁹ In 1866, Jesuits opened a post in Laura, in West Sumba. Reverend J. van Alphen was the first Dutch Protestant missionary, arriving on Sumba in 1881, and staying in Melolo, in East Sumba. Education and healthcare are usually regarded as state services, but in Sumba they were part of the missionaries' work. Teaching the Christian gospel went hand-in-hand with teaching about the state. The missions supported colonial rule by educating local elites so that they could become administrators.²⁰ The introduction of a universal religion enabled Sumbanese to imagine themselves as part of larger totalities.

With the "Flores-Sumba Contract" of 1913, the colonial government tried to prevent Catholic-Protestant competition, with the agreement allowing the Catholics to operate in Flores and the Protestants in Sumba.²¹ The Protestant schools in Sumba received government subsidies and official approval. From this time on, the Sumbanese elite's children were educated in Christian schools. Literacy came to be

¹⁶ For more-elaborate accounts of the political history of Sumba, see Oemboe Hina Kapita, *Sumba di dalam Jangkauan Jaman* (Waingapu: Gunung Mulia, 1976); Hoskins, *The Play of Time*, pp. 29–57; and Vel, "The Uma Economy," pp 75–104.

¹⁷ Hoskins, *The Play of Time*, p. 50.

¹⁸ "[In patrimonialism] the object of obedience is the personal authority of the individual, which he enjoys by virtue of his traditional status. The organized group exercising authority is, in the simplest case, primarily based on relations of personal loyalty, cultivated through a common process of education. The person exercising authority is not a 'superior,' but a personal 'chief.' His administrative staff does not consist primarily of officials, but of personal retainers [...] What determines the relations of the administrative staff to the chief is not the impersonal obligations of office, but personal loyalties to the chief." Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1957), p. 341.

¹⁹ Data from Kapita, *Sumba di dalam Jangkauan Jaman*, p. 39.

²⁰ Hoskins, *The Play of Time*, p. 282.

²¹ End, Th. van den, *Gereformeerde zending op Sumba 1859–1972. Een bronnenpublicatie* (Alphen aan den Rijn: Raad voor de Zending, 1987), p. 160.

seen as an attribute of Christianity.²² Elementary pupils selected for further studies entered "boarding school," which operated out of the missionaries' houses. There the selected children were expected to convert. Janet Hoskins wrote that, in the late colonial period, Sumbanese distinguished their own social and geographic sphere of the ancestral village, where they worshipped their spirits, from the wider world beyond the island and from everything pertaining to government offices, hospitals, and schools, which were the realm of foreigners and the Christians religion.²³ Christianity offered an entrance to that wider world, and Sumbanese simply combined their traditional beliefs with the new religion. The educated elites of Sumba were therefore Christian.

Umbu Djima is the great-grandson of a *raja* appointed by the Dutch in 1913. Being educated in Christian schools led him, first, to become a successful bureaucrat and university teacher, then West Sumba district chief, and, finally, a member of the national parliament in Jakarta. His success might have been extraordinary, but his life history is rather typical of the Sumbanese elite, particularly since the 1960s. As elite children pursued their higher education outside Sumba, sponsored by their relatives, they grew detached from their village of origin and became more "Indonesian" than Sumbanese. They created new networks on other Indonesian islands. Career opportunities in Sumba are few, so many educated Sumbanese do not return after graduation. Yet, they still maintain links with their home villages. Migration does not alter their position within the kinship system, nor the obligations within the reciprocal economy, especially for weddings and funerals. Sumbanese living outside Sumba say they are there only temporarily, and that their home remains in Sumba, to which they will return when they retire and where they will be buried.²⁴

POVERTY AND STATE EMPLOYMENT

For educated Sumbanese who live in Sumba, the state is the most important employer. Ninety percent of the district government budget derives from Jakarta. More than two-thirds of the budget is spent on the state apparatus itself. Members of the Sumbanese political class draw their livelihood from subsidies from the central state. Yet they are only a small minority compared to the part of the population that lives off the land. The table on the next page presents statistics on population and economy in Sumba and, for comparison, similar data for the province NTT and for Indonesia in general. The data show that a relatively prosperous political class operates in one of Indonesia's poorest areas.

The statistics in Table 1 (below) show that NTT, on average, is very poor; that West Sumba has the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) within NTT; and that

²² When I use the term "Christianity" I'm referring to that world religion in general, which was brought to Sumba by European missionaries, including both the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. Only when the context requires that I be more specific do I use the terms "Protestant," "Catholic," or the names of the churches.

²³ Hoskins, *The Play of Time*, p. 287.

²⁴ Whether Sumbanese living outside Sumba still subscribe to this ethic is a question for more empirical research. Many of them have spouses from other parts of Indonesia, which increases their detachment from Sumba.

both Sumba districts have the lowest HDI in all of Indonesia.²⁵ The macroeconomic indicators give a slightly distorted picture because they are measured in monetary terms, whereas many rural household meet their requirements without cash, through subsistence or barter.²⁶ The state sustains Sumba's cash economy, while agriculture provides the daily livelihood for well over 80 percent of the population. In Sumba, "the state" as an idea is mainly that entity which provides extended families with a monetary income. The ideal for any family is to place a close relative in a wage-earning position—the state is the best provider of such employment—and then to share the salary (income) with a larger group in return for food, labor, and ceremonial services. Familial and community networks, therefore, can exchange food and domestic labor (from the villages) for cash and luxury goods (from state jobs in town). Urban professionals can rely on their relatives in their village of origin to organize weddings and funerals, while villagers have a base in town for their children's schooling and for medical care.

All parents in Sumba hope their children will grow up to become civil servants and to obtain a service number (*Nomor Induk Pegawai*, NIP) to prove their permanent membership in this prosperous class. Extended families invest large amounts in school fees. It is common practice to sell the families' most valued objects, as well as valuable livestock, to pay university fees.²⁷ These extended family interests explain the anger about nepotism in the selection of candidates for civil-servant positions in 1998, when demonstrations about that issue eventually led to mass violence in the streets of West Sumba's capital, Waikabubak.²⁸ Whereas in other areas in Indonesia violence escalated on the basis of tensions among religious communities or against immigrants,²⁹ in Sumba frustration about limited access to the political class caused tension among those who felt excluded.

²⁵ The Human Poverty Index ranking is somewhat better for East Sumba. That index measures, among other factors, access to clean water and health facilities. A relatively large percentage of East Sumba's population—one-third—resides in the district capital town, where these things are available. See BPS Statistics Indonesia, BAPPENAS, and UNDP [United Nations Development Program], *National Human Development Report 2004: The Economics of Democracy: Financing Human development in Indonesia* (www.undp.or.id/pubs/ihdr2004/ihdr2004_full.pdf, last accessed on March 13, 2009), p. 144.

²⁶ For the strategies adopted by Sumba's rural population to meet residents' monetary needs, see Vel, "The Uma Economy," pp. 145–232.

²⁷ Vel, "The Uma Economy."

²⁸ Jacqueline Vel, "Tribal Battle in a Remote Island: Crisis and Violence in Sumba (Eastern Indonesia)," *Indonesia* 72 (October 2001): 141–58; and David Mitchell and Tuti Gunawan, "Violence and Democratic Process in West Sumba; Part I: The Road to Violence, 1995 to November 1998," paper presented at the UGM/Flinders workshop on "Reformasi Lokal," Yogyakarta, 2000.

²⁹ Gerry van Klinken, "New Actors, New Identities: Post-Suharto Ethnic Violence in Indonesia," in *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific: Histories, Political Economies, and Policies*, ed. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Hélène Bouvier, Glenn Smith, and Roger Tol (Jakarta: KITLV/Yayasan Obar Indonesia and LIPI, 2005), pp. 79–100.

Table 1
Population and Poverty Levels in Sumba, Compared with NTT and Indonesia³⁰

	West Sumba	East Sumba	Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT)	Indonesia
Population in 2005	404,000	206,000	4,260,000	219,205,000
2005 Gross Domestic Product, Per Capita (in US dollars ³¹)	\$239	\$368	\$360	\$1,320
Surface area, in km ²	4,051	7,000	49,880	1,919,317
2002 UN Human Development Index Ranking (scale from 1 = best)	339 (out of 341 districts)	329 (out of 341 districts)	30 (out of 30 provinces)	108 (out of 177 countries worldwide)
2002 UN Human Poverty Index ranking (scale from 1 = best)	329 (out of 341 districts)	209 (out of 341 districts)	24 out of 30 provinces in total	41 among the 102 developing countries for which the index has been calculated
Percentage of the working population engaged in agriculture as the main economic activity (i.e., <i>tani</i>)	87 (in 2002)	84 (in 2002)	78 (in 2005) ³²	44 (in 2005) ³³

SOCIO-POLITICAL STRATIFICATION

Up to this point, I have already referred to the “political class” several times as a group whose members control state resources and who relate to each other through various strong and interconnected networks. This chapter’s main argument is that the state on Sumba can best be understood as the domain of this political class, and that state functioning can best be analyzed by studying political-class members’ activities. Therefore, it is important that I clarify the concept of political class.

The political class is part of a socio-political stratification in Sumba that indicates three types of relations between the state and society. If society is imagined as a pyramid, the political class is the top, the majority class of *tani* (explained below) is

³⁰ Sources: BPS Statistics Indonesia (www.bps.go.id and <http://ntt.bps.go.id>), last accessed on March 13, 2009; BPS Statistics Indonesia, BAPPENAS and UNDP *National Human Development Report 2004: The Economics of Democracy: Financing Human Development in Indonesia* (www.undp.or.id/pubs/ihdr2004/ihdr2004_full.pdf, last accessed on March 13, 2009); and the CIA’s world fact book (www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/id.html, last accessed on March 13, 2009).

³¹ For comparative purposes, the income figures are given in US dollars, using an exchange rate of 1 US dollar = 9,000 rupiah.

³² <http://ntt.bps.go.id/mploy/mp02.htm> (accessed August 13, 2007).

³³ <http://www.bps.go.id/sector/employ/table2.shtml> (accessed August 13, 2007).

the base, and in-between is a small layer for the intermediate class, referred to here as "political public." The political class is characterized mostly by its capacity to appropriate state resources. Its income derives primarily from the state, through formal salaries and government projects, and oftentimes through bribes, mark-ups, rents, and other forms of corruption. In analytical terms, this part of society is a class because its members' revenues and sources of income are so similar.³⁴ I refer to it as the *political* class because it is connected to the resources of the state.

The concept "political class" is not quite the same as political elite. The political elite is the relatively small and wealthy group of people sharing similar values and interests that "can effectively dictate the main goals (if not always the practical means and details) for all really important government policy making (as well as dominate the activities of the major mass media and educational/cultural organizations in society) by virtue of their control over the economic resources of the major business and financial organizations in the country."³⁵ The political elite is therefore defined in relation to its steering capacity, and it is motivated by power interests. The political class, by contrast, is defined as part of the overall social stratification, and it is motivated by interests of economic and social security for itself.³⁶ "Political class" is therefore more appropriate to describe the whole top layer of Sumbanese society. Used in that way, a "political class" is broader than a "political elite" because the former group also encompasses people without formal positions who nevertheless have the capacity to appropriate state resources, including businessmen and (some) retired officials, as well as wives, mothers, sisters, and children of men who hold the key positions in the network that constitutes the political class.

Vedi Hadiz and Richard Robison used "oligarchy" as a collective term to denote all the members of the small, corrupt ruling group in Indonesia that, according to their argument, remained in power in spite of (formal) regime changes that took place since Indonesia's independence.³⁷ "Oligarchy" is less appropriate for describing the top layer of Sumbanese society because the term refers to a system of government rather than to social stratification. Another reason why I prefer to use the term "political class" is that oligarchy "always has a negative or derogatory connotation in both contemporary and classical usage."³⁸ Since "political class" does not suggest the predatory nature of the group in its definition, it is a more neutral term that allows for different degrees of predatory behavior among its members.

Burhan Magenda analyzed the strategies of locally powerful groups in the Outer Islands of Indonesia using the concept "local aristocracies."³⁹ In inland states, these

³⁴ Karl Marx used the phrase "identity of revenues and sources of income," quoted in Klaus Von Beyme, "The Concept of Political Class: A New Dimension on Research of Elites?," *West European Politics* 19,1 (1996): 77.

³⁵ Paul M. Johnson, "A Glossary of Political Economy Terms," Department of Political Sciences, Auburn University, www.auburn.edu/~johnspm/gloss/, accessed on May 6, 2007.

³⁶ Von Beyme, "The Concept of Political Class," pp. 71–72.

³⁷ Richard Robison and Vedi Hadiz, *Reorganising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets* (London and New York, NY: Routledge Curzon, 2004).

³⁸ Johnson, "A Glossary of Political Economy Terms": oligarchy.

³⁹ Burhan D. Magenda, "The Surviving Aristocracy in Indonesia: Politics in Three Provinces of the Outer Islands" (PhD dissertation, Cornell University, 1989), p. 59.

aristocracies based their ruling position on their power over land (the most important economic resource), which they presumably “acquired principally through gift or inheritance from a long line of similarly privileged and cultivated ancestors.”⁴⁰ I argue that, on the contrary, local power positions in an Outer Island like Sumba are no longer based on inherited privileges, but on specific combinations of forms of capital, many of which are achieved rather than inherited.

The political-class model deviates from the hierarchical model more commonly found in academic writing on Sumba, which distinguishes between nobility, free people, and slaves.⁴¹ In analyses that rely on such distinctions, traditional ranks are deployed to describe the social system in Sumba “in such a way as to show its relation to other aspects of their social and conceptual order.”⁴² There is no room for the state. The traditional stratification is still most relevant in the private sphere of life, where norms of kinship and marriage affiliation rule conduct. Yet this sphere is only part of life. The economy, bureaucracies, politics, and other influences that connect Sumbanese to people outside their ethnic-kinship realm also determine power, success, wealth, and career opportunities. Webb Keane, Joel Kuipers, and Janet Hoskins do include the role of the state in their analysis of parts of Sumbanese society.⁴³ Kuipers shows how state ceremonies in West Sumba are occasions for local leaders to reestablish their authority.⁴⁴ Hoskins relates how a young male commoner from Kodi became *raja* and thus owed his local societal power to the colonial state.⁴⁵ Keane describes how people in Anakalang in the 1980s “experience the state either as a distant, potentially benign patron or as a distinct language and discursive style (Indonesian and certain kinds of bureaucratic speech associated with it).”⁴⁶ Nevertheless, even in these studies that admit the state’s influence and mention Sumbanese state officials, the state seems to remain external to Sumbanese society. By contrast, in this chapter I show how the state is internalized and appropriated by a “political class,” as previously defined.

Inclusion of some businessmen in the political class expands the concept beyond comprising only public officials (*pegawai*). Members of the political class are aware of their privileged position; they devote energy to maintaining relations within the class and creating barriers to entry that others must overcome. The political class does not coincide with any single institution; members connect with each other through networks that become visible at private ceremonial occasions, as well as at public meetings. Inclusion in the political class yields access to information, economic

⁴⁰ Johnson, “A Glossary of Political Economy Terms”: aristocracy.

⁴¹ Gregory L. Forth, *Rindi – An Ethnographic Study of a Traditional Domain in Eastern Sumba* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), p. 214.

⁴² Forth, *Rindi*, p. 461, n. 1.

⁴³ Here I selected only single examples of how these authors write about the state in Sumba, which is not sufficient to acknowledge fully their approaches to the state. The latter would require an article by itself.

⁴⁴ Joel C. Kuipers, *Language, Identity, and Marginality in Indonesia: The Changing Nature of Ritual Speech on the Island of Sumba* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 90–91.

⁴⁵ Janet Hoskins, *Biographical Objects: How Things Tell the Stories of People’s Lives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), p. 100.

⁴⁶ Webb Keane, *Signs of Recognition: Power and Hazards of Representation in an Indonesian Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. 40.

opportunities, and state services (e.g., police will actually act as they should when ordered to do so by high police officials who are members of the political class). Inclusion enables social mobility, as one can skip the lower levels of the bureaucracy, and thus skip paying the otherwise necessary bribes. But downward mobility—losing influence—can also occur. The main criterion for membership in the political class is quite practical, namely, the ability to exert real influence on the allocation of state resources (e.g., money, jobs, permits, and violence). Thus membership is constantly reevaluated.

There are two important ways of counting those *outside* the Sumbanese political class. First, we can read the official district statistics. The 87 percent portion of the population “engaged in agriculture as the main economic activity” (see Table 1) could be called the productive class, which earns its livelihood locally through agriculture in the widest sense, including animal husbandry, forestry, and fishery. Yet on Sumba, being *tani* (a farmer) is an emic residual category. It includes everyone who does not have a salaried position or who lacks a job-specific answer to the census question about occupation. Unemployed people would rather call themselves “*tani*” than “unemployed.” Claiming to be “*tani*” is an implicit admission that one has not yet been very successful in life. Thus, the census statistics do not fully reveal Sumba’s socio-political stratification.

Herb Feith used a political-stratification model that focused on the role of individuals in the political process. He saw them as participants in a leader-followers unit. He portrayed the distribution of power outside the elite as a series of three concentric circles, with power diminishing as one’s political distance from the elite increases. The middle circle—surrounding the innermost elite core—consists of people of lesser political influence: “The political public may be defined as consisting of persons of a middle range of political effectiveness, persons outside the political elite who nevertheless saw themselves as capable of taking action which could affect national (district) government or politics.”⁴⁷ Membership is determined by “the state of mind which requires a man to communicate with those others than those to whom he is tied within his traditional society.”⁴⁸ Feith calls those in the outer circle the “masses,” people who consider their status too low to be politically active. If we allocate all the *tani* in Table 1 to Feith’s “masses,” they would constitute at least 84 percent of Sumba’s population. In reality, this is too high a percentage, for the reasons noted above. I would estimate, instead, that roughly two-thirds of Sumba’s population is made up of those who consider themselves to be common people with no influence on the allocation of state resources.⁴⁹ This group makes up the outer circle in Feith’s model.

Closer to the center is Feith’s “political public.” These people hope for influence, but do not live mainly off the state. They are often wannabes not quite enjoying the status of insider. Examples could be a village chief who runs political campaigns on behalf of his social superiors, a village teacher on casual rates, a student or young graduate looking for work, or someone who has left the inside circle because of

⁴⁷ Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp. 109–10.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ This estimation is based on my impressions during fieldwork in the period between 1984 and 2006, when I lived in Sumba for six years (1984–1990) and visited frequently (1998–2006).

retirement or some stigma. There are even a few who refuse to participate for idealistic reasons. I roughly estimate that this group, or circle, amounts to a quarter of the population. Adding the political public and *tani* leaves about 10 percent for the political class.

In Feith's model, the boundaries between the "political class," the "political public," and "*tani*" are not as clearly delineated as its hypothetical circles suggest. Analytically, this is a weakness of the concept of political class, and one of the reasons why, according to Jens Borchert,⁵⁰ some political and social scientists reject it. Yet, in reality, membership in these classes is fluid, not static, which makes the model empirically useful. Exactly because the boundaries are not fixed, people in Sumba are actively involved in accumulating various forms of capital in order to get access to the political class.

The political public and the *tani* benefit from a state that serves the public interest. That would be the case when a high percentage of the state's budget is allocated to services for the public, and when those services are deemed to be high quality and accessible without the imposition of any additional political cost, fee, or mark-up. Reality is often different, though.

The political class derives its livelihood from the state not just by earning salaries as state officials, but also by serving as officials who sell state services for an additional fee or for a percentage of the profits; as contractors who execute state projects; or as politicians who can assemble votes in elections. The higher one's position in the internal hierarchy is, the better the chance of rewards. The ranking system within the political class has three dimensions: power, wealth, and status. Status is context-specific.

As I discuss next, the life history of Umbu Djima illustrates how a boy from Central Sumba grows in status until he becomes a prominent member of the political class in West Sumba and thereby increases his wealth and power along the way.

UMBU DJIMA AND THE FORMS OF CAPITAL

How does someone become a member of the political class in Sumba? Recent direct elections showed that economic wealth alone is not enough to secure the highest state position of the district, the office of district chief, for a particular candidate.⁵¹ Umbu Djima looks back on a successful career, and when he told me his life history, he mentioned a wide range of ingredients accounting for that success. I found Bourdieu's theory about "the forms of capital" useful for analyzing Umbu Djima's story in terms of power strategies. Bourdieu defines the concept as follows:

[C]apital can present itself in three fundamental guises: *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of

⁵⁰ Jens Borchert, "The Concept of Political Class: From Mosca's Ruling Class to Self-Referentiality of Professional Politics," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA, 2002, p. 3.

⁵¹ Jacqueline Vel, "Pilkada in East Sumba: An Old Rivalry in a New Democratic Setting," *Indonesia* 80 (October 2005): 81–108.

educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.⁵²

These distinctions help us understand how the state is embedded in society in Sumba. It also clarifies why some Sumbanese are more successful than others, and why activities that at first glance seem to be "just cultural" are so important for politics. The notion "capital" addresses different resources of power, and it links the cultural to the economic. The key theoretical question is how these different forms of capital transform themselves into each other in order to maximize accumulation.⁵³ The examples below illustrate these theoretical concepts.

In February 2004, Umbu Djima told me his life history.⁵⁴ He was born in 1939, in Central Sumba, in the traditional domain Anakalang,⁵⁵ to one of the area's noble families. According to the local myth of origin, there was rivalry among the founding fathers of Anakalang's lineages over the authority to divide the land. This myth is invoked to explain today's political factionalism. In 1880, the Dutch Indies government installed Umbu Dongu Ubini Mesa as the first *raja* of Anakalang and handed him the golden staff.⁵⁶ After the Second World War, the *raja*'s grandson Umbu Remu Samapati was appointed the second district chief of West Sumba, and he moved to the district capital, Waikabubak. His deputy, who was also his brother-in-law, Umbu Sulung Ibilona, succeeded him as *raja* of Anakalang. Umbu Djima was Umbu Sulung's eldest son. Umbu Djima remembers his childhood in his home *kampung* as one of freedom and privilege. He was the first of seven children by Umbu Sulung's first wife (one of four wives). Umbu Djima learned *adat* (traditions) by observing ceremonies and negotiations. In 1946, Umbu Djima was sent to the Christian elementary school in Anakalang. Graduating in 1952, he went to secondary school in the Payeti mission center, in East Sumba—this was his initiation into Christian culture. His strongest memories of those years focused on the missionaries' home rules and discipline. After the second grade, he moved to Waikabubak, in

⁵² Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," p. 243.

⁵³ Tom Schuller, Stephen Baron, and John Field, "Social Capital: A Review and Critique," in *Social Capital: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Tom Schuller et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 4. That article explains how Bourdieu's concept of "social capital" differs from that deployed by Robert Putnam in *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993). Moral obligations and norms, social values (especially trust), and social networks (especially voluntary associations) are the three components of Putnam's concept of social capital. His central thesis is that if the population in a region has successfully accumulated social capital, then this will have a positive effect on the region's economic system and level of political integration. Putnam's concept of social capital was applied to Indonesia by Anthony Bebbington, Leni Dharmawan, Erwin Fahmi, and Scott Guggenheim, in "Local Capacity, Village Governance, and the Political Economy of Rural Development in Indonesia," *World Development* 34,11 (2006): 1958–76. Eschewing political struggle, they apply the concept instrumentally to foster social values that can countervail corruption by state officials, thus stimulating village institutions that underpin community-driven development.

⁵⁴ Interview on February 21, 2004, Waibakul, Sumba.

⁵⁵ At present the domain Anakalang is administratively divided over several *desa* (villages), among which is *desa* Waibukul, where the large church was built.

⁵⁶ Kapita, *Sumba di dalam Jangkauan Jaman*, p. 60.

West Sumba, graduating from junior secondary school in 1958. He continued his senior secondary education in Java, since Sumba had no senior high school then. His family bore the expense. In Salatiga, in Central Java, one of Java's Christian centers, he lived with other Sumbanese students. After that he studied social and political sciences at the national Gadjah Mada University, in Yogyakarta. He was active in the Indonesian Christian Student Union, GMKI (Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia). Upon graduation, in 1965, he was immediately employed as a civil servant in the office of the governor of NTT, in Kupang.

Before taking up the position, he went back to Sumba to marry. His wife was the daughter of a noble family from Loli, in West Sumba. Together they moved to Kupang, early in 1966, where he worked at a new office dealing with NTT's central government policies (*urusan pusat*). At the governor's office there were only seven university-educated employees, and all of them had to teach at the local university. In 1968, Umbu Djima became head of the office and director of the Academy for Domestic Public Administration (Akademi Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri) in Kupang, where many civil servants received their education. In addition, he was a member of the provincial parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD), from 1968–71.

In 1974, the next step up on his career ladder was to head the Department of Education and Culture, and he was also elected a dean at University of Nusa Cendana, in Kupang. In 1975, the Ministry of Domestic Affairs selected him to participate in a one-year "upgrading" (training) program for civil servants, in Nice, France. Classes centered on regional government, since the French system seemed to be instructive for Indonesia. Umbu Djima's first experience abroad made a big impression on him: he was influenced by this new culture's language, routines, the silence in the offices, weather (cold), discipline, and its work ethic. Upon returning to Kupang, he first became assistant secretary to the governor, Ben Mboi, and, three years later, head of a new institution to "socialize" the New Order's developmentalist ideology, BP7.⁵⁷ From 1982 until 1987 Umbu Djima was also the appointed representative for NTT province in the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR), in Jakarta, where he and his wife maintained a second household. The Kupang residence continued to be a resort for Sumbanese students and relatives, sometimes hosting up to forty people at a time. When the district chief of West Sumba died in 1984, Governor Ben Mboi asked Umbu Djima to succeed him. At that time, Golkar and the army decided these things, and in practice the governor—who had a military rank as well—had the largest say. In the 1980s career bureaucrats perceived moving from the provincial center to a district capital as a demotion, and thus Umbu Djima accepted only reluctantly, but he went on to serve from 1985 until 1995. He put his modernizing experiences to work in instituting his primary government program, which aimed to introduce "new ways," *Heka Pata*, and put an end to what he called "wasteful traditional ceremonies," and to rationalize agricultural practices. Much like his colonial predecessors, he was a homegrown descendant of the *raja*, who ruled on behalf of a modern state. In West Sumba, the strength of the New Order regime was not its capacity for repression, but its record of successful development as visible in schools, health facilities, infrastructure, and economic development, and in its ability to maintain civil peace.

⁵⁷ Badan Pembinaan, Penyelenggaraan Penegaraan, Pendidikan, Pedoman, Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila, the Pancasila (Indonesian State Ideology) Propagation Board.

Golkar was the sole political organization. It "had the service of many able and idealistic men and women at its disposal, and it had earned legitimacy in office from a long record of achievement."⁵⁸

Two years after Umbu Djima retired as district chief in 1995, he was elected to represent Golkar in the National Parliament, DPR-RI (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat-Republik Indonesia) in Jakarta. He was still a member when the Suharto regime fell in 1998, and he thus became a firsthand *Reformasi* witness. In 1999, he retired fully and returned to Sumba, where he had his old house in the district capital, Waikabubak. He also built a new, large house in a traditional style, but with modern comforts, in his home village, Waibakul. In 2000, he started the local church's building committee.

Umbu Djima's life history shows that he is an expert in Indonesian politics, with experience ranging from Jakarta to his Sumbanese village. It also testifies to his wealth of cultural and social capital, which requires, as Bourdieu reminds us, a long time to accumulate. In Umbu Djima's case, it took him twenty years of formal education, followed by years of additional learning as a university lecturer, and, of course, the training course in France. Not many of his generation in Sumba have such wealth. Sumbanese respect him for his knowledge of *adat*, of Protestant Christian culture and teachings, of the state bureaucracy, of Indonesian politics from the national to the village level, and even of foreign cultures. The most obvious symbols of his capital are the photographs in his house that record his participation in many prestigious occasions, his horse-racing trophies, and the large house in the village where he lives most of the time. His titles, which identify him as the holder of a university degree (*doctorandus*), as a (former) district chief (*mantan bupati*), and now as a "chairman of the church building committee," underline his status in terms of cultural capital.

A career like Umbu Djima's also requires economic capital. He studied in Java because his family could afford it; they sold their livestock to pay his school fees and boarding costs. Economic capital was transformed into cultural and social capital, for example, by those relatives to whom Umbu Djima's family became indebted because they contributed the livestock that was sold. They could reclaim this debt later when, for example, their children stayed at Umbu Djima's Kupang house to attend senior high school. In addition, his years as bureaucrat, lecturer, parliamentarian, and district chief all earned him economic capital.

Umbu Djima's life choices kept him connected with his kinship networks. First, he married a Sumbanese woman according to the traditional rules of preferential marriage, reestablishing the marriage alliance between his own and another important sub-ethnic group. The resultant social capital was politically useful. Second, he returned to Sumba as district chief. Success required a good position in local networks. The material obligations of reciprocal gift-giving—an established tradition in Sumba within such networks—can become a heavy burden. (For example, attending the weddings or funerals of fellow network members requires bringing a horse or a large pig as a sign of continuing relations.) Other Sumbanese men of Umbu Djima's generation with similar biographies made less burdensome choices. Many married outside their ethnic group, which excluded them from expensive Sumbanese exchange obligations. Sumbanese who reside outside Sumba

⁵⁸ Mitchell and Gunawan, "Violence and Democratic Process in West Sumba," p. 2.

can live an individual life independent of Sumbanese obligations, which facilitates accumulation of economic capital but not social capital.

Umbu Djima belonged to many networks: the kinship network in his home village, the Christian network through the missionaries' schools on Sumba, the Sumbanese students' network, the Indonesian Christian students' network, the network of pupils from the academy in Kupang where he taught for many years, bureaucratic networks, and, last but not least, Golkar. In this way, he accumulated a large volume of social capital because of the size of the network he could effectively mobilize and because many of those to whom he is connected possessed a large volume of capital (economic, cultural, or symbolic) in their own right.⁵⁹ Indeed, the church being built in Waibakul since 2001 is the result of Umbu Djima's network connections created during a long career. Social network connections can only be transformed into status or economic capital if they imply durable obligations subjectively felt or institutionally guaranteed. Bourdieu argued that:

[...] this is done through the alchemy of *consecration*, the symbolic constitution produced by social institution (institution as a relative—brother, sister, cousin, etc.—or as a knight, an heir, an elder, etc.) and endlessly reproduced in and through the exchange (of gifts, words, women, etc.) which it encourages and which presupposed and produces mutual knowledge and recognition. Exchange transforms the things exchanged into signs of recognition and, through the mutual recognition and the recognition of group membership which it implies, reproduces the groups. By the same token, it reaffirms the limits of the group i.e., the limits beyond which the constitutive exchange—trade, commensality, or marriage—cannot take place.⁶⁰

A special occasion organized to raise funds for the church building is such a "consecrating" event, for donors who participate in such an occasion become members of a group that includes powerful politicians, wealthy traders, charismatic leaders who can attract votes, and political party officials. Donating money to the church building can also be understood as buying one's way into an influential political-cum-personal clique, a branch of the network that interacts with the entire political class. Before I turn to the story about the church building, however, it is necessary to explain why building a church can be so conducive to creating status.

STATUS IN A (POST-) MEGALITHIC CULTURE

Sumbanese recognize many types of status symbols. Modern ones would include, for example, the size, shape, and number of one's houses. According to present-day norms, a successful Sumbanese man must have several houses: one in his home village, one in the town where he resides when he is in Sumba, and one in Kupang or Java. His houses in Sumba are preferably built along the main road, and combine traditional Sumbanese stylistic elements—like peaked roofs—with expensive building materials, e.g., plastered stone walls, decorative tiles, and flooring tiles.

⁵⁹ Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," p. 248.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

Another typical Sumbanese elite-status symbol is the horse-racing trophy. Horses are not mere possessions, but have a relationship with their owner, and this is even stronger for special horses, such as a man's riding horse or race horse.⁶¹ Horses are symbols of masculinity, and horse races can therefore be interpreted as competitions in masculinity among horse owners, resembling the "deep play" that Geertz read in the Balinese cock fight.⁶² Individuals who win such a trophy will put it on prominent display in their home.

The ultimate personal status symbol is a large tombstone. Impressive graves and elaborate burial feasts are common in many other parts of Indonesia.⁶³ There is a clear connection between the splendor of the funeral and the status of the deceased.⁶⁴ Prominent rulers should be buried in large tombs. The most prestigious tomb in Anakalang, and the largest on the island, was built for Umbu Djima's grandfather and Raja Anakalang, Umbu Sappi Pateduk. It is called *Raisi Moni*, which means "most macho."⁶⁵ The ability to construct large graves remains one of the criteria for membership in the traditional elite. Webb Keane described how ordinary people perceived Anakalang leaders in the 1980s:

When people talk about nobles, they often talk about their wealth and by extension, their generosity and protectiveness—and their danger when angered. [...] The activities that most distinguish a noble in practice—setting up great tombs, holding feasts, maintaining dependents, negotiating dynastic alliances, and sponsoring the marriages of others—require not only supporters but wealth as well.⁶⁶

The supporters mentioned in the quote above are people who benefit from the noble's generosity and protection, those who depend on him for material help with their own ceremonies, and who are invited to the noble's feasts and so "belong" to his group.⁶⁷ Wealth on Sumba used to be measured in livestock—water buffalo, horses, and cattle—and, especially in the humid rural areas, by one's ability to produce food by organizing paddy fields and labor. Wealthy men would organize large feasts to prove their capacity to produce food, create surpluses, and exhibit their power to get other people to contribute. The size and shape of their families' tombs were, and are, also important indicators of wealth and status. Establishing the

⁶¹ Louis Onvlee, "The Significance of Livestock on Sumba", in *The Flow of Life: Essay on Eastern Indonesia*, ed. James Fox (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980) p. 196.

⁶² Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973).

⁶³ Regarding Tana Toraja, see, for example, T. A. Volkman, *Feasts of Honor, Ritual, and Change in the Toraja Highlands* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985); regarding Bali, see Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*; and regarding Borneo, see Peter Metcalf, "Meaning and Materialism: The Ritual Economy of Death," *Man*, New Series, 16-4 (December 1981): 563–78.

⁶⁴ Hoskins, "So My Name Shall Live," p. 31.

⁶⁵ Keane, *Signs of Recognition*, p. 42.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁷ For the importance of feasts in similar contexts, see Brian Hayden, "Fabulous Feasts: A Prolegomenon to the Importance of Feasting," in *Feasts: Archeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power*, ed. Michael Dietler and Brian Hayden (Washington, DC, and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), pp. 23–63.

largest tombs required months (or even years) of stone-dragging by hundreds of people and feeding them meals with meat. According to the ancestral Marapu religion, tomb stones were thought to possess their own spirit (*ndewa*). Stone-dragging would only proceed smoothly if a proper ritual singer would use his spiritual powers to command the spirit of the stone. The dragging songs also indicated the right rhythm to the draggers.⁶⁸ The construction of megalithic tombs thus was highly dependent on the relations the stone-dragging organizer had built up over time.⁶⁹ Tombs symbolize strength and status—they demonstrate the ability to mobilize labor and thus are evidence of a large social network. Janet Hoskins pointed out the unusual chronological sequence of tomb-building and death in West Sumba, where prominent men do not need to rely on the willingness of their relatives to construct large graves for them after their deaths, but instead can sponsor stone-dragging ceremonies by themselves, for themselves. In this way, several years or even decades before their death they may assure themselves of a prestigious grave and of having earned enduring renown as a great feast-giver.⁷⁰

The option of building one's own elaborate tomb added to the repertoire of status-seeking. At present, stone-dragging rarely takes place any more, and instead elaborate tombs are constructed with modern materials like bricks, cement, and decorative tiles. Although such modern tombs still signify the status of the deceased, the construction process does not qualify for status-seeking in the same way that stone-dragging did in the past. For modern Christian men, a problem with traditional tombs (which require lots of stone-dragging) is that they are associated with the ancestral Marapu religion. A large and beautiful church building solves this predicament and could be regarded as a modern version of a huge tombstone. The building process resembles the stone-dragging that lasted for months and involved hundreds of people, who had to be fed each day. The church's worshipful purpose resembles that of the stone-dragging, which can only be done well with the consent of the divine ancestors. Both church and tomb symbolize authority and status.

READING POLITICS FROM THE BOOK OF DONATIONS

Along the main road between East and West Sumba, twenty-two kilometers east of Waikabubak, one passes Anakalang. The *Lonely Planet Guide* draws the attention of the occasional tourist first to the impressive tombs in *kampong* Pasunga, and then to those in *kampong* Kabondok:

Walk 10 minutes along the road past the market to Kabondok, home to Sumba's heaviest tomb weighing in at 70 tons. The construction is said to have taken 2,000 workers three years to chisel the tomb out of a hillside and drag it to the site.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Jacqueline Vel, *Uma Politics*, p. 69.

⁶⁹ Ron Adams, "The Megalithic Tradition of West Sumba," a preliminary research report, Simon Fraser University (2004); see www.sfu.ca/archaeology/dept/fac_bio/hayden/reports/sumba.pdf, p. 46, accessed on March 13, 2009.

⁷⁰ Hoskins, "So My Name Shall Live," p. 31.

⁷¹ Peter Turner, *Indonesia's Eastern Islands: Lonely Planet Travel Guide* (Hawthorn: Lonely Planet Publications, 1998), p. 379.

Figure 2
The Church in Waibakul
(a) the old building in 1986,⁷² (b) the new church in 2006



⁷² Photo of old building by Webb Keane, reprinted with permission. See also Webb Keane, *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), p. 253. Photo of new building by the author, 2006.

The tomb mentioned in this quote was erected for former Raja Anakalang Umbu Sappi Pateduk in the first years of the twentieth century. Nearly a century later, the new Protestant Christian Church of Waibakul is being built not far from this and other famous tombs, and the church's developer and sponsor is Umbu Djima, grandson of Umbu Sappi Pateduk. Although the new church was still under construction in 2006, it was clear that it would be enormous when completed, many times the size of the old church, as Figure 2 above shows with two pictures taken in 1986 and 2006, respectively, from nearly the same position.

The building budget was initially estimated at 600 million rupiah,⁷³ not counting contributions in kind: labor, food, and building materials. The building committee divided the congregation members into eight categories, according to their household's economic strength. Those who earned a regular salary were scaled into four groups, according to their civil-service ranking. The remainder were classified as *tani*, and the building committee decided that the size of the *tani*'s paddy field holdings would be the basis for dividing this population into another four groups. Individuals in the lowest ranks of both categories, "civil servants" and "farmers" (*tani*), had to contribute 100,000 rupiah, whereas members of the highest ranks had to give one million.⁷⁴ Even so, there would be a budget shortfall, for obviously the cost of this large church would exceed the original estimate. By August 2006, the budget was estimated at one billion rupiah. Umbu Djima, however, was a creative and successful fundraiser. Every week after the church service, the building committee's treasurer would publicly report that week's donations. When she showed me the book of donations, I saw a beautiful illustration of Umbu Djima's network.

The treasurer read out to me all donations over 1 million rupiah, and I summarized them into eight groups (see Figure 3, below). The book of donations documents a social network that is a branch of the political class. The rules of conduct in this network are part of the "moral economy of the political class" on Sumba, which I explain below. Why did people "willingly" give a large donation to the building committee? The normative answer is that the church is the house of the Lord, and building and maintaining it well is a religious obligation for Christians, and for the congregation members in particular. Donating to the church in general qualifies as a good deed. Yet, the book of donations can also be read as a list of people who invest in access to Umbu Djima's network. What is it that they are investing in when donating to this particular church building in Waibakul, and what rewards do they expect? For each of the eight groups, I reconstructed answers to this question that differ from the normative one, linking the reason for donations to interests that are specific for that group.

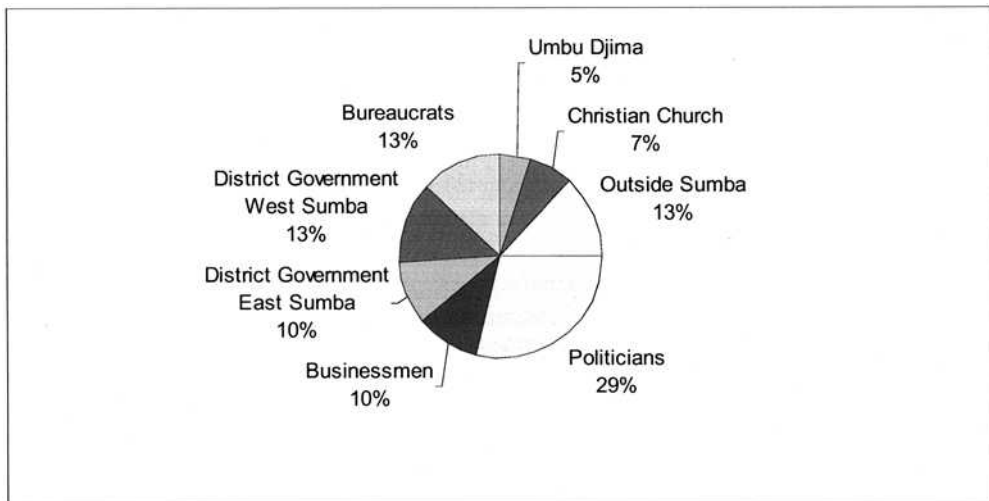
The first category of donations for the church includes the regular contributions by the members of the local congregation. (These are not noted in Figure 3 because, for my purposes, it is the social network of people giving large donations, rather

⁷³ About 50,000 euros in 2006, which is a very large amount of money in Sumba (see Table 2, below, for a comparison with the district state budget).

⁷⁴ Respectively, about nine and ninety euros. Ninety euros (1 million rupiah) is about equivalent to the monthly salary of a village schoolteacher, or equal to about four seventy-five kilogram bags of paddy.

than the full construction budget, that matters.⁷⁵) Many of the local congregation members are proud of the large building and are actually willing to contribute. But the fact that these “donations” were obligatory according to rates set by the building committee created some resistance among a certain percentage of the congregation. A voluntary donation program would have created better feelings than did this “tax.” Church members who did not donate could expect sanctions. To be excluded from the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, for example, is an effective threat in Sumba because it is humiliating not to join in the common meal.

Figure 3
Donations to Anakalang’s New Church*



* Donations from 2001–August 2006, totaling 198 million rupiah

The wider Protestant Christian church provides a social network that can also be tapped, a broad network that constitutes a second category of donors. One way to tap this network is by organizing special ceremonies at which invited guests will feel obliged to donate. Yet in this case, the larger part of the funds in this category was derived, not from individuals, but from the central office of the Protestant Church of Sumba (Gereja Kristen Sumba, GKS). At the time of this GKS donation, its senior officer was the former reverend at Waibakul. His approval of a donation from central church funds can be regarded as his display of (and additional investment in) his cultural and social capital in his home area. Part of those central church funds were, in fact, “reallocated,” or diverted, from a program for village economic development that should have been implemented by a farmers’ group. This group’s chairman, who decided to donate this money to the church building project instead of buying goats, cattle, or agricultural equipment for farmers, was making an investment in

⁷⁵ This category of regular donations by congregational members is not included in Figure 2, which lists only the special donations over one million. This story concentrates on these “external” donations and their politics and not on the actual financing of the building process.

social capital. Apparently the chairman considered good relations within Umbu Djima's network a potentially more rewarding way to spend those earmarked funds.

Umbu Djima received 26 million rupiah for the church's construction from private individuals (not congregation members) residing outside Sumba. Donations by nonresident, Anakalang-born Sumbanese can be regarded as investments in cultural capital in the homeland where they would like to be buried. The moment to donate was when they visited their home village, or when they met Umbu Djima outside Sumba.

Umbu Djima's daughter gathered a considerable amount of money from members of the organization for ethnic Sumbanese in Kupang, the "Sumbanese family in Kupang" (IKAS, *Ikatan Keluarga asal Sumba di Kupang*). The moral pressure among peers in this organization resulted in many "gifts" that thus can also be classified as investments in social capital within the IKAS group. Four individual donors on the list are not even Sumbanese. One has a computer business in Yogyakarta and is treasurer of the foundation for the Christian university, Duta Wacana, in that city. Three are lawyers in Jakarta, who each donated five million rupiah. Without a clear link to Sumba, they were probably investing in relations with Umbu Djima, or were paying him a gratuity for previous services.

Politicians running for office are the best contributors. They make up the largest source of donations. Their interest is to create a constituency. The donations are publicly announced in church, with the name of the donor noted. The recorded donations in the book of donations coincided with the early phases of several election campaigns. The incumbent governor of NTT, Piet Tallo, who was running for another term, made a gift in 2002. By late 2002, candidates for the general elections of 2004 were starting to campaign informally. The largest donations came from candidates residing outside Sumba. The champion (top) donor up until August 2006 was Victor Laiskodat, who would run for NTT governor on a Golkar ticket in 2008.⁷⁶ Umbu Djima had been a prominent Golkar member for many years. His career as district chief and parliamentarian resulted in his acquiring strong political networks at the district, provincial, and national levels. Of all Indonesia's political parties, Golkar was known to have "the best-organized political machine: it had thirty-two years of history and is much better off than other parties financially."⁷⁷ For those who aspired to a good career in the bureaucracy, it was rewarding to be a Golkar member. Umbu Djima met Laiskodat's group by coincidence while both were traveling to Kupang. On that occasion, Umbu Djima invited Laiskodat's group to come to Sumba. Since election rules prohibited official rallies prior to the rally period announced by the General Election Committee, another reason for a meeting or celebration had to be invented. Eventually, Laiskodat was invited to come to the former raja's *kampong* in Anakalang for the commemoration of the fortieth day of an important Golkar member's mother's death.⁷⁸ All Golkar adherents in the wide area

⁷⁶ In March 2008 Laiskodat announced he would not be a candidate in the governor elections, but he supported another candidate from the Golkar party. See: www.indomedia.com/poskup/2008/03/30/edisi30/utama_1.htm, accessed on February 13, 2009.

⁷⁷ Leo Suryadinata, *Elections and Politics in Indonesia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002), p. 207.

⁷⁸ It is unusual to celebrate this occasion on Sumba, as it is not part of any Sumbanese tradition.

were invited as well. There, in the midst of the Christian service to thank the Lord (*ucapan syukur*), Laiskodat announced his donation of 25 million rupiah.

There are four more groups (from Figure 3) whose interests in donating to the church I will discuss. For each, their livelihood depends on state resources. Therefore it is necessary that I first explain something about the state resources in this district and the relations between district chiefs, businessmen, and bureaucrats.

The district chiefs of both West and East Sumba (shown in Figure 3, above, as "district government") contributed a considerable amount to the church building's budget, through donations offered either as official district government gifts or under the private name of the district chief. With their donations, the chiefs showed that they respected Umbu Djima as their senior and advisor. The donations can also be interpreted as a reward for his support during the elections. Golkar's strategy in the 2005 direct elections for district heads in West and East Sumba (Pilkada) differed from that of other parties. Whereas Golkar carefully selected candidates its leaders thought would have the best chance of winning, the other parties seemingly opted for the short-term strategy of making money out of the election campaigns by selecting the highest bidders as their candidates. Golkar's candidate for West Sumba, Julianus Pote Leba, held his campaign rally for the easternmost election area in Umbu Djima's house. Golkar's chairman in West Sumba, Toda Lero Ora, is Umbu Djima's brother-in-law. In both East and West Sumba, the Golkar candidate won, and both new district chiefs regarded Umbu Djima as their senior and advisor.⁷⁹ Such a position means influence over the district chiefs.

The stakes involved in securing a high district government position have increased considerably since regional autonomy was effectuated in 2001. Autonomous districts receive funds from the central government in Jakarta, according to a complex division formula.⁸⁰ Now, relatively poor districts such as the two on Sumba receive much more money than they did before decentralization, and consequently the government budget in the two Sumba districts has increased around 300 percent. Moreover, the district government enjoys full autonomy over spending that budget. As a result, the position of district chief has become the most attractive office in Sumba. Second best are positions as district parliament member and high positions in the district bureaucracy. Table 2 shows that the amounts of government income originating from the district itself and the district revenues originating from the central government both increased considerably over the period 2000–2004, and that the latter is by far the most important source of district government funds.

Bureaucrats and politicians all over Indonesia followed developments around decentralization anxiously, and thought about the opportunities this new mandate provided for their own regions and careers.⁸¹ West Sumbanese in Jakarta, in the provincial capital, Kupang, in Waikabubak, and in the villages and small towns of West Sumba could all imagine themselves in a position somewhere in this new

⁷⁹ Interview with Yulianus Pote Leba, September 1, 2006, Waikabubak.

⁸⁰ BPS-Statistics, BAPPENAS and UNDP, *National Human Development Report 2004*, p. 60.

⁸¹ Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken, "Introduction," in *Renegotiating Boundaries: Local Politics in Post-Soeharto Indonesia*, ed. Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007), p. 2.

Table 2
District Government Revenues in East and West Sumba, 2000–2004⁸²

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
West Sumba (in billions of rupiah)					
Government revenues originating from district (<i>Pendapatan asli daerah</i>)	1.8	4.7	8.3	10.3	11.4
Revenues from central government (<i>Dana</i> <i>Perimbangan</i>)	46.6	143.2	153.2	196.8	210.0
East Sumba (in billions of rupiah)					
Government revenues originating from district (<i>Pendapatan asli daerah</i>)	1.4	3.8	7.7	10.5	10.6
Revenues from central government (<i>Dana</i> <i>Perimbangan</i>)	34.6	135.1	137.3	173.0	181.8

political environment. Getting such a position, however, required investing in connections. A donation to the church in Waibakul was such an investment. It bought membership in a group to which important Golkar members and both of Sumba's incumbent district chiefs belong. Two-thirds of the donations from "bureaucrats" came from department heads whose roots were in Anakalang. Their donations can be regarded as investments in their own home village. Prominent among the donors was the head of public works (*Kepala Dinas Kimpraswil*), a position known all over Indonesia as one of the most "rewarding" in the bureaucracy.⁸³ This official donated in total an amount that equals five times his monthly salary. In the

⁸² For East Sumba, see ir. Umbu Meheng Kunda, Bupati Sumba Timur, "Laporan Keterangan Pertanggungjawaban Akhir Masa Jabatan Bupati Sumba Timur, periode 2000–2005," pada Sidang DPRD Sumba Timur, 2005, p. 173. For West Sumba, see "Memori Pelaksanaan Tugas Bupati Sumba Barat Tahun 2000–2005," Sekretariat Daerah Kabupaten Sumba Barat, 2005, pp. 157–58.

⁸³ Gerry van Klinken and Ed Aspinall, "Building Relations: Corruption, Competition, and Cooperation in the Construction Industry," in *Illegality and the State in Indonesia*, ed. Ed Aspinall and Gerry van Klinken (forthcoming). Neill Stansbury, "Exposing the Foundations of Corruption in Construction," in "Global Corruption Report 2005," Berlin, Transparency International, 2005, pp. 36–40 (see: www.transparency.org/publications/gcr/gcr_2005#download, accessed on April 3, 2009).

same period, he was building a large house in his home village.⁸⁴ In general, donating corrupt money to the church could be regarded as a means of clearing one's conscience while simultaneously satisfying one's political interests.

Figure 4
Business Links with the Bupati



The last category of donors is "businessmen." In West Sumba, there are about sixty companies, and most of those are owned by ethnic Chinese. These companies constitute West Sumba's transport and construction sector, and control inter-island trade, exporting mainly agricultural products from Sumba and importing products that are not available on the island, including construction materials (e.g., cement). In the church's book of donations, businessmen's contributions represented only 10 percent of the cash donations collected in support of the building project. Yet, on top of those cash donations they also provided contributions in kind: sand, cement, stones, and other building materials; and transport of same. When Umbu Djima

⁸⁴ Other than these facts, I have no hard evidence that the head of public works was involved in any corrupt activities. But if the source of his wealth had been from, say, an inheritance or winning a lottery, than all my local informants would have known about that.

celebrated his birthday in March 2006, he invited a large number of businessmen from West Sumba. He openly announced that he would be very pleased with donations for the church as birthday gifts. At the party the guests passed around a list on which “voluntary” donations could be announced. For the invited businessmen—contractors who regularly compete for government projects—the birthday celebration was an opportunity to strengthen ties within the group gathered around Umbu Djima. Close connections with high government officials and influential political party members provide information on new business opportunities for their companies. The local newspaper *Sabana* showcased the district chief’s links with local businessmen in numerous congratulatory advertisements. As an example, the advertisement in Figure 4 (above) shows how six local companies congratulated the newly elected district chief and his deputy with their official inauguration.⁸⁵

The last “category” of donors in Figure 3 contains only one person, Umbu Djima himself. Once retired, former state officials lack a formal office to maintain their status. They must rely on the private sphere. The church building process offered Umbu Djima many opportunities for exactly that. In 2001, he set an example by opening the list of donations with a personal gift of 10 million rupiah. For the last phase of the building project to be implemented, after August 2006, Umbu Djima still had to gather over 100 million rupiah. He apparently succeeded, and the church was completed and officially inaugurated in 2008. The church had become his personal prestige project. As with a large, traditional tomb—although this church is a house of the Lord—Umbu Djima’s name will always be associated with it.

THE MORAL ECONOMY OF THE POLITICAL CLASS

The large donations to the church discussed above are first of all gifts to enable the building committee to build a new House for the Lord. Yet, they can also be interpreted as investments in relations with people who have decision-making power regarding the district state budget. The political-cum-personal clique around Umbu Djima is a sub-network of the district’s political class that includes influential members of the ruling political party Golkar, the district chiefs of both West and East Sumba, wealthy businessmen, and Sumbanese residing outside Sumba. This sub-network is the structure for the transformation of capital: social and cultural capital can be transformed into economic capital, and vice versa. The building committee chairman’s birthday party, the multiple marriage consecrations in church, and the memorial ceremony forty days after a mother’s death all served effectively as backdrops for announcing donations to the church and simultaneously transforming economic into social capital. Too, the donations create reciprocal obligations. Traditionally in Sumba, the moral code for exchange among partners in a network with short social distance is generalized reciprocity, and thus the reciprocal obligations were not specified at the moment of donating. Those obligations could be services received in the past that were now repaid with the donation, or with services some time in the future.

Obligations appear as exchanges, which can involve money, but also can involve less tangible entities: votes of support, status, or preferential positions in future negotiations. The moral economy of the political class has nothing to do with the

⁸⁵ *Sabana*, edition 77 (September 2005), p. 12.

romanticized solidarity one finds in James C. Scott's original concept of "moral economy of the peasant."⁸⁶ Within the political class, the rules of conduct and exchange create a moral gloss that makes it acceptable for its members to take a disproportionate share of the state's resources that should belong to every citizen.

Local discourse on the practices and qualities of senior state officials in Sumba often focuses on visits and exchanges: who is connected with whom and what is the material result? For example, the story might concern the district chief of East Sumba attending the funeral of an unrelated person and presenting a buffalo as a gift. From a legalistic Western point of view, the gift may seem corrupt—depending on how the gift was financed. But the actors themselves designate such transactions as perfectly legitimate. They may characterize them as mutual assistance, as political expenses (*onkos politik*), gifts, donations, as "a way to open the door," or as contributions.⁸⁷ Nils Bubandt mentioned the euphemistic terms used in North Maluku for such practices: "mutual help" (*baku bantu*) and "wise deliberation" (*kebijaksanaan*).⁸⁸ These expressions refer to long-standing and accepted ways of social interaction.

Blundo and Olivier de Sardan called these acts "corrupt investments," and they defined them collectively as a corruption strategy involving the "formation of enduring relationships," and "gratuity" (a basic form of corruption).⁸⁹ Analyzing the story about the church donations in terms of corruption strategies brings us back to the "private activities" of the political class, which characterize the state. In the case of the church's book of donations, there is no hard proof—nor was it my intention to prove—that the gifts originate from corruption, or will be successful as corrupt investments. In general it is very hard to obtain such proof. Instead, as I have explained in this chapter, a tradition of gift exchange provides the way to maintain and create social relations. When combined with forces that localize state budgets and power in the districts, the gift-exchange custom stimulates the creation of a strong political class whose moral economy is very suitable for supporting a developing "corruption complex," a term coined by the Africanist Olivier de Sardan:

The notion of corruption may be broadened into what can be termed a "corruption-complex," in other words beyond corruption in the strict sense, to include nepotism, abuse of power, embezzlement and various forms of misappropriation, influence-peddling, prevarication, insider trading and abuse of the public purse, in order to consider what these various practices have in

⁸⁶ James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976).

⁸⁷ Transparency International (TI) has chosen a clear and focused definition of the term: "corruption" is operationally defined as the misuse of entrusted power for private gain. TI further differentiates between "according to rule" corruption and "against the rule" corruption. Facilitation payments, where a bribe is paid to purchase preferential treatment for something that the bribe receiver is required to do by law anyway, constitute the former. The latter, on the other hand, involves bribes paid to obtain services the bribe receiver is prohibited by law from providing or services to which the giver of the bribe was not entitled. See www.transparency.org/news_room/faq/corruption_faq#faqcorr1, accessed on October 3, 2006.

⁸⁸ Nils Bubandt, "Sourcery, Corruption, and the Dangers of Democracy in Indonesia," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11,2 (2006): 426.

⁸⁹ Blundo and Olivier de Sardan, *Everyday Corruption*, pp. 75–82.

common, what affinities link them together, and to what extent they enter into the same fabric of customary social norms and attitudes.⁹⁰

Corruption in this wide sense is to be expected in contexts characterized by a supportive "logic," that is, by styles of thinking and conduct involving gift-giving, negotiation, and solidarity. These logics go beyond any particular society in Africa or Indonesia to be much more generally applicable. They are strong in Sumba. "Logics of negotiation" arise in a society with multiple normative systems, each with its own rules. There is no general consensus on which normative system is best, nor on the precise rules for each system, which are selected, modified, and reinvented along the way.⁹¹ In Sumba, state law can be overruled if those involved declare the matter to be a concern of the church or of customary law.⁹² In Sumba, where all negotiations involve material exchanges, it is not difficult to imagine how the "logics of gift-giving" could support the diffusion of corruption.⁹³ Now that money and other modern objects, such as motorcycles, increasingly replace the traditional exchange items of horses, buffalo, pigs, and cloth, these "gifts" are more easily classified as bribery, also by Sumbanese themselves. The "logics of the solidarity network" imply that in such a network one is obliged to give mutual assistance. The art of relationship politics involves maneuvering to occupy a pivotal position in various solidarity networks to support one's political interests. Members of such a network cannot easily turn down a request for support. Umbu Djima's church's book of donations contains many examples of members of his network who obviously could not refuse his request.

Since 2000, many Indonesian state officials have found themselves accused of corruption. The Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, KPK) has sent dozens of senior Indonesian government executives and parliamentarians to jail for embezzling large sums of state money. On the local level the district courts have sentenced many thousands for corruption around Indonesia over the last decade.⁹⁴ Future research should investigate whether these anti-corruption measures succeeded in limiting the appropriation of state funds in ways that, according to the norms of the political class in Sumba, might be "just" personalistic and patrimonial arrangements between state officials and other parties.⁹⁵

Just as the rules of the game within the political class support the development of a corruption-complex that favors their interests, those same rules create injustices

⁹⁰ Jean Pierre Olivier de Sardan, "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 37,1 (1999): 27.

⁹¹ On the concept of legal pluralism in Indonesia, see Franz von Benda-Beckmann, "Changing Legal Pluralisms in Indonesia," *Yuridika* (Majalah Fakultas Hukum Universitas Airlangga) 8,4 (1992): 1–23.

⁹² Vel, "The Uma Economy," pp. 106–8.

⁹³ Olivier de Sardan, "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?," p. 39.

⁹⁴ See, for example, on corruption cases in NTT: http://nttonlinenews.com/ntt/index.php?view=article&id=1825%3Aapiar-kasus-dugaan-korupsi-terbanyak-di-rote-ndao-paling-sedikit-di-sumba-timur-kerugian-negara-rp-217-miliar&option=com_content&Itemid=50, accessed on March 22, 2009.

⁹⁵ Joel S. Kahn and Francesco Formosa, "The Problem of 'Crony Capitalism': Modernity and the Encounter with the Perverse," *Thesis Eleven* 69,1 (2002): 48.

by diverting the state's resources away from large numbers of common people. Supporting logics that belong to the ethic of the political class include "logics of predatory authority" and of "redistributive accumulation."⁹⁶ The result is that members of the *tani*-class or the political public encounter obstacles when they try to get access to state services. For obtaining state employment, or asking the police for help, one already needs considerable capital. For example, I know a twenty-four year-old man from Central Sumba named Yapi who had studied electronics engineering for three years in Java. Upon his return, he applied for a junior position with the state electricity company. He was told that the "entrance fee" was three million rupiah. To earn the right to a salary, he first had to pay an amount equal to three months' salary. He gave up in frustration, and in his anger he started a fight over a woman. The police interfered, and they released him only after his family paid four million rupiah to the policemen.⁹⁷ This short story is simply one of many. It shows how ordinary people in Sumba encounter the state in their daily life. As Akhil Gupta observed in his study of corruption in India: "everyday encounters provide one of the critical components through which the state comes to be constructed."⁹⁸ Yapi had run into an obstacle blocking his entry into the political class. He lacked the capital to be included; he had neither an academic degree, nor sufficient cultural capital to conduct the skilled negotiations for access to state services or positions,⁹⁹ nor a network, nor even the money to afford the bribe.

Recent investments in status objects, such as fancy private houses and disproportionately large church buildings, indicate the new wealth of Sumba's political class. At the same time, the economic situation of the *tani* had improved little in 2006, if at all.¹⁰⁰

Summarizing, I argue that since regional autonomy started in 2001, the political class has become larger and stronger in Sumba. It is characterized by its capacity to appropriate state resources, and, at the same time, by its high status within the broader society. The state is essentially a network of state agents socially rooted in this political class. Regional autonomy increased the power of the political class to influence decisions about the state budget. As much as the (rather loosely implemented) regulations will allow, its members often make these decisions on the basis of a traditional "gift exchange" morality, which they have translated into a veritable moral economy supporting reciprocal obligations within the political class. The localization and informal privatization of the state serve to increase the importance of private relations among state agents, and thus to reinforce the

⁹⁶ Olivier de Sardan, "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?," p. 39.

⁹⁷ This is a real story that happened in 2006, and the young man's mother told me about it.

⁹⁸ Akhil Gupta, "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State," *American Ethnologist* 22,2 (1995): 78.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

¹⁰⁰ Quantitative data about citizens' actual levels of income and its sources—including income from "private" or "informal" activities—would be required to confirm whether inequality between the political class and the rest of the population is increasing. Data of this nature does exist, but it is difficult to interpret accurately for several reasons, including because occupational categories in Indonesian economic census surveys are too broad, and because the surveys are too small to be reliably disaggregated for a restricted area like Sumba.

opportunities for the private profits of these agents and their cliques.¹⁰¹ Prestigious buildings in areas where the majority of people live in poverty make the cleavage between the political class and the *tani* visible. The new church in Waibakul is a beautiful house of the Lord, but the budget for building it could also have been spent on activities that more directly benefit the poor, who, after all, make up most of its congregation. Instead, like one of the old Sumbanese megalithic tombs, the church building appears to be a monument to the status competition among the newly empowered local political class.

¹⁰¹ For comparable processes in an African context, see Blundo and Olivier de Sardan, *Everyday Corruption*, p. 109.

PROVINCIAL BUSINESS AND POLITICS

Syarif Hidayat and Gerry van Klinken

Democratization has brought business into Indonesian provincial politics to an extent not seen before. Bureaucrats continue to dominate local elections around Indonesia—they constituted over a third of all local candidates in one recent survey—but more than a quarter of the candidates in this same survey were businesspersons.¹ Democracy has not opened the door to a wholly new type of governing elite, but it has made aspiring powerholders look harder for rich business friends. The two case studies in this chapter show how this development has affected provincial politics. Democracy has proliferated allegations of corruption, partly because democracy invites allegations of all kinds, but also because more corrupt transactions really are taking place. The simple logic that democracy needs money, which breeds corruption, came late to Indonesia. The combined domination of bureaucrats and business interests over local politics now makes Indonesia resemble Thailand. Daniel Arghiros concluded his study on Thai democratization and decentralization with the words: “We could describe the democratic process at the village, subdistrict, provincial, and national levels with a single explanatory model that refers to just two phenomena: vote buying and political clientelism.”²

Few comparable studies of provincial business–politics relations exist yet for Indonesia. This chapter examines the familiar and the unfamiliar in Indonesia’s provinces of Jambi and Bengkulu, both in Sumatra, after the introduction of the direct election system for provincial governors in 2004.³ The successful candidates demonstrated a self-possession that has long been familiar to observers of the provinces. But the victor in each case also faced a problem that was novel in Indonesia, though it is typical of all weakly regulated democracies: “How will I repay my debts to business and political supporters without alienating my broader public and my Jakarta superiors?” Edmund Terence Gomez described this problem more generally in his introduction to an edited volume on “political business” in

¹ In this survey of fifty local elections, 36 percent of the candidates were bureaucrats and 28 percent were businessmen. See Marcus Mietzner, “Local Democracy: Old Elites Are Still in Power, but Direct Elections Now Give Voters a Choice,” *Inside Indonesia* 85 (January–March 2006): 17–18.

² Daniel Arghiros, *Democracy, Development, and Decentralization in Provincial Thailand* (Richmond: Curzon, for the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2001), p. 273.

³ Fieldwork was conducted by one of us (S. H.) in April and July 2006.

Asia: “[T]he scale—and form—of corruption is growing with the emergence of democracy in East Asia, particularly in the Philippines, Thailand, and South Korea ... due to the need for politicians, having captured office through funding from capitalists, to pay back such support by channeling rents to the latter.”⁴

Jambi and Bengkulu are both rather typical of outer island provinces. Both have per capita gross regional domestic products below the national average, both are less urbanized than the national average, and in both the urban economy is rather heavily dependent on subsidies from the central state. Both provinces conducted direct elections for new governors in 2005, and both the elected governors were businessmen. In Jambi, the incumbent was reelected. He had long combined business activities with a position in the bureaucracy. In Bengkulu, the new officeholder had previously been a “pure” business entrepreneur.

JAMBI

Jambi’s direct election took place on June 26, 2005. Zulkifli Nurdin and his running mate, Antony Zeidra Abidin, won a stunning majority of 80.3 percent (995,792 votes).⁵ The four most powerful positions in the provincial state are those of governor, deputy governor, provincial secretary, and provincial parliamentary chairperson. The first three are executive positions that, in Jambi, were filled in the wake of Zulkifli’s victory, while the fourth is legislative and thus determined through a parliamentary process. As we shall see, in Jambi a fifth person outside this formal structure, named “H. R.,” also played a significant role as political and business manager for the governor. Business, political parties, and family networks are the key social institutions outside the state that influence such contests.

Zulkifli Nurdin was supported by the political party PAN (Partai Amanat Nasional, National Mandate Party), although he was not a party cadre. He was well-known as a businessman. His father, Nurdin Hamzah, had achieved success as a retail distributor in the 1960s. The family had expanded into construction, particularly of retail outlets. It is said that most shops in Jambi town were built and are still owned by the Nurdin family.⁶ Although Zulkifli left the running of the Nurdin family business empire mostly to his younger brother Hazrin Nurdin, his roots in a well-to-do family were a political asset because they were widely thought to make him less likely to indulge in greedy self-enrichment. Moreover, Zulkifli’s father was respected in Jambi as a philanthropist who gave generously to the needy, a reputation that also passed to the son.⁷

The newly appointed provincial secretary, H. A. Chalik Saleh, who controls the money, was a career bureaucrat with long provincial experience. He had been appointed to this position when Zulkifli was first elected governor in 2000, and the two were close friends. The new provincial parliament chairperson, Zoerman Manaf, was a businessman and a Golkar politician. He held an important position on the

⁴ Edmund Terence Gomez, ed., *Political Business in East Asia, Politics in Asia* (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), p. 10.

⁵ Panitia Pengawas Pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Jambi, “Laporan,” Jambi, 2005, p. 23.

⁶ Interviews with *Jambi Independent* journalist J. R., April 8, 2006; NGO activist B. I., April 4, 2006; and Jambi provincial parliamentarian S. J., April 11, 2006.

⁷ Personal interview with *Jambi Independent* journalist D. P., April 7, 2006.

party's provincial board (Dewan Pimpinan Daerah, DPD). He, too, was close to the governor, for the two had been boyhood buddies, and they were related by marriage. Zoerman was the son of Abdul Manaf, the first governor of Jambi province in the late 1950s. Abdul Manaf had been close friends with Nurdin Hamzah, the current governor's father. Abdul Manaf's son Arifin Manaf had married a daughter of Nurdin Hamzah, and Arifin had gone on to become mayor of Jambi town, a position he still held in 2006.⁸ In other words, most of the central players in Jambi's establishment elite were familiar and comfortable with one another.

The same could not be said of relations between the governor and his deputy. Deputy Governor Antony Zeidra Abidin was also a business entrepreneur, but not of the same caliber as the governor, Zulkifli. He was a Golkar party cadre, having once sat on the national board (Dewan Pimpinan Pusat, DPP), and he had been a national parliamentarian when asked to stand for deputy governor in Jambi. It was said that the relationship between Zulkifli and Zeidra Abidin was "not intimate," or was even "stand-offish."⁹ The deputy governor was not consulted concerning the appointment of senior provincial officials (bureau heads, *kepala-kepala dinas*), nor was he invited to meetings to discuss the disbursement of contracts for government projects. He was also prevented from making visits to the districts, where he might have spoken freely with the locals.¹⁰

This strained relationship came about because Deputy Governor Zeidra Abidin consciously acted to resist, and in effect counterbalance, the personalization of power that seemed to have resulted from the election and threatened to make the governor-parliamentary chair duo too powerful. Indeed, we were told this had been the reason why he was put forward as a running mate to Zulkifli in the 2005 election.¹¹ It was thought he would be up to the job because he was older and more experienced than the governor, and because he held an influential position in Golkar, to which the parliamentary chairman also belonged. No doubt Abidin's difficulties with the governor also stemmed from his desire to recoup a slice of the post-election political and economic goodies in proportion to his share of the election costs. Abidin consequently found himself disagreeing on many occasions not only with the parliamentary chair, but also with the governor. He functioned as the internal opposition within the Jambi provincial government. So, for example, he condemned the "Water Boom" tourist project, which the duo supported, on the grounds that Jambi had no need of it.

The fifth person in the provincial establishment was H. R. He was a close relative of the governor, and, like him, an entrepreneur. He held an important position on the Jambi provincial board of Golkar. The governor asked him to play the key role in his electoral team in 2005, his so-called "success team" (*tim sukses*). H. R. designed the strategy for victory and handled logistics and finance for the campaign. His Golkar position also gave him access to the parliamentary chairperson, with whom he enjoyed a good relationship. After the election, he continued to play important,

⁸ Personal interview with *Jambi Independent* journalist S. F., November 7, 2005; and personal interview with Jambi provincial parliamentarian Z. M., April 14, 2006

⁹ Personal interview with a senior official in the governor's office, Z. A., April 13, 2006.

¹⁰ Personal interview with senior official Z. A.; personal interview with journalist S. F.; and personal interview with Batanghari University academic I. C., April 13, 2006.

¹¹ Personal interview with Jambi provincial parliamentarian K. R., April 13, 2006; and personal interview with senior official in governor's office, F. Z., April 14, 2006.

though informal, roles on the governor's behalf. He was so influential that we heard it said: "If you want to become a provincial bureau head [*kepala dinas*], you had better get the blessing and a ticket from H. R. first."¹² H. R. also dealt with opposition parties and NGOs, and he acted as a go-between with business interests on behalf of both the governor and the parliamentary chairperson. He negotiated with them and was authorized to "filter" those entrepreneurs permitted to tender for government projects.

No sooner was the election over than the first signs of controversy began to surface about collusion between businesspersons, the governor, and the parliamentary chair. Between the end of 2005 and February 2006, the so-called "Water Boom" case, which involved the planned construction of a tourist recreational park in South Jambi subdistrict, dominated the local headlines.¹³ The centerpiece of the thirty-three-hectare park was the Water Boom itself, a large pool equipped with machinery to create "wild" water and waves. Other facilities included a playground, theater stage, zoo, forest reserve, and more recreational facilities involving water.¹⁴ Construction was estimated to take twenty-seven months, starting from early 2005, at a cost of Rp 121.7 billion (approximately US\$ 12 million). The money was to come from the provincial budget.

In response to criticism that the project was wasteful, the governor and parliamentary chairperson gave two reasons for supporting the project. They repeatedly declared in their speeches that, by underwriting this park, the government was doing something about "Jambi's serious shortage of recreational facilities."¹⁵ The completed project would also bring in substantial local taxation revenues, they claimed. A recreation tax of 10 percent charged on entrance ticket prices was expected to raise Rp 20 billion (US\$ one million) in the first ten years of the park's operation.¹⁶

In July 2005, just after the June election, the Jambi provincial government chose PT Karya Restu, a company owned by Jakarta entrepreneur Sudiro Lesman, to build the park and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the enterprise. On December 14, 2005, this company signed a subcontract with its subsidiary PT Laksana Aneka Sarana, owned by A. B. Santo C. H. Two days later, officials released the first tranche of Rp 2 billion from the provincial budget.¹⁷ By January 2006, with Rp 6.4 billion spent, the land for the Water Boom facility at Rimba Park, Paal Merah, had been cleared and leveled.

Students and NGOs now started to protest that the Jambi provincial budget had not been drawn up transparently and that the Water Boom project was unnecessary

¹² Personal interview with Jambi construction entrepreneur F. E., April 16, 2006. Others who spoke to one of us (S. H.) about H. R.'s influence were Jambi NGO activist B. D., April 8, 2006; senior official Z. A.; and provincial Chamber of Commerce (Kadin) executive S. J., April 13, 2006.

¹³ "DPRD Dituding Kong-Kalikong," *Jambi Independent*, January 13, 2006.

¹⁴ Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Jambi, "Laporan Studi Kelayakan Pengembangan Taman Wisata dan Rekreasi Provinsi Jambi," Jambi, 2006.

¹⁵ "Panitia Anggaran DPRD Tetap Setujui Water Boom," *Jambi Independent*, December 19, 2005, and January 7, 2006.

¹⁶ Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Jambi, "Laporan Studi Kelayakan Pengembangan Taman Wisata dan Rekreasi Provinsi Jambi," Dokumen Studi Kelayakan, 2006, p. 26

¹⁷ "Demo di DPRD Jambi Rusuh Lagi," *Jambi Independent*, January 4, 2006.

and a waste of public money.¹⁸ They suggested that if the project were to continue despite public protests, it should be privately funded. Parliamentary chairperson Zoerman Manaf at first played down the criticism, saying he was sure “the people will in the end agree and enjoy the Water Boom. It is the only one in Sumatra and will bring in revenue for the provincial government.”¹⁹ Deputy Governor Zeidra Abidin, on the other hand, declared on the same day that the government would review the project, and he questioned its usefulness.

On December 22, 2005, the Jambi Pro-People Student Movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Jambi Pro-Rakyat, GMJPR) held a public discussion with the theme “What’s Up with the 2006 Jambi Provincial Budget?” Two leaders of the influential Student Executive (Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa, BEM) said the budget was “not transparent and not pro-people [*pro-rakyat*].” The student alliance promised it would continue to pressure parliament before the budget was approved on December 26, 2005, adding: “We strongly reject the misuse of [political] office for business purposes.”²⁰ Law lecturer Dasrin Rajab at the University of Jambi also attacked the Water Boom plans, saying that they deviated from the general policy guidelines (Arah Kebijakan Umum, AKU) that had been approved by the provincial parliament. He added that there was altogether too much manipulation by officials and business interests in provincial development projects.²¹ Chairperson Zoerman responded by asserting that the protest had come too late because construction equipment had already been purchased by the contractors.²²

On December 26, the day parliament was to discuss the 2006 budget, GMJPR students demonstrated outside and then forced their way into the building, where they clashed with police guarding the session. Some dozens of students were taken to hospital with injuries from having been beaten and kicked.²³ The “bloody incident” led parliament to adjourn its plenary session indefinitely. Two days later, after the governor and the parliamentary chairman had met with the budget committee, the two officials announced at a press conference that they appreciated the students’ concerns, and that the executive and legislative branches had agreed to cancel the Water Boom Park project. They would deal with the contractor, they promised, and the chairperson said that his budget committee would decide what to do about the money already disbursed.²⁴

Naturally, PT Karya Restu was not pleased to hear this news. Owner Sudiro Lesman rushed to Jambi on December 30 to talk with parliament, and he spoke to the local newspaper by telephone.

What are you going to do now that the Water Boom park is canceled?

I just want to appeal to the conscience of Jambi’s people and government.

This project is for them, yet now they have canceled it themselves.

Are you going to court?

¹⁸ Personal interview with Transparansi International activist I. B., April 8, 2006.

¹⁹ “Panitia Anggaran DPRD Tetap Setujui Water Boom,” *Jambi Independent*, December 19, 2005.

²⁰ “Zoerman: Protes Tak Berguna,” *Jambi Independent*, December 24, 2005.

²¹ “Penolakan APBD Kian Gencar,” *Jambi Independent*, December 23, 2005.

²² “Zoerman: Protes Tak Berguna,” *Jambi Independent*, December 24, 2005.

²³ “Demo Rusuh, Korban 10 Mahasiswa,” *Jambi Independent*, December 27, 2005.

²⁴ “Proyek Water Boom Dibatalkan,” *Jambi Independent*, December 29, 2005.

Not yet. If I did I'm sure my company would win. I not only possess the MoU, but also many other letters and strong proofs.

Why don't you speak out publicly?

If I did that, a lot of people would turn out to have been involved. So my principle is, don't break the law, don't undermine justice. I feel betrayed, because I only want the best for Jambi and for it to have a place for recreation.

Sudiro's statement (combined, no doubt, with "lobbying" of the governor and parliamentary chairman) produced the desired effect. Construction work continued uninterrupted at the park site. Student protests became less massive than before, though they did not stop entirely, and government officials started passing the buck when asked to react to the student protests. The governor said that he had signed an order to stop work, but the head of the Tourism Bureau tasked with the construction asserted that he had not received such an order.²⁵

Could Zulkifli's and Zoerman Manaf's persistence in supporting the Water Boom project have something to do with the 2005 gubernatorial election? It would take a complete audit to confirm the suspicion that this is true, but the indications point in that direction. Let us trace the interests involved. Inside sources told us that the parliamentary chairperson received an "envelope," also known as a "project fee," from the private developer to approve the park proposal put forward by the governor.²⁶ The governor's own role was explained to us as follows:

Mr. Zul[kifli] was the incumbent governor, right? Had been for five years. Naturally he had been building a strong business network since 2000. He had known Sudiro, the Water Boom constructor, from that period. Sudiro had done provincial government projects before. He renovated the Jambi Representative Office in Jakarta, for example. It's easy to understand why Sudiro would want to contribute to Mr. Zul's reelection fund. Once Mr. Zul was reelected, the Water Boom project was part of the business compensation that had to be given to Sudiro. We should see this simply as flowing out of the law of cause and effect.²⁷

More explicit information from other sources indicated that the Water Boom contractor had contributed Rp 5 to 10 billion (half a million to a million US\$) to the governor's campaign fund, most likely towards the upper end.²⁸ The size of this donation could explain the political pain the governor was prepared to bear to push on with the Water Boom project in the face of opposition.

However, it soon became clear that the pain did have limits. Sudiro Lesmana was charged at the Jambi provincial court for misconduct in the Water Boom

²⁵ "Gubernur Teken Surat Penyetopan," *Jambi Independent*, January 5, 2006.

²⁶ Personal interview with senior official in governor's office, A. A., April 14, 2006; personal interview with Jambi entrepreneur S. P., April 16, 2006.

²⁷ Personal interview with senior official in governor's office, Z. F., April 13, 2006. Z. F. was a key member of the governor's *tim sukses* during the gubernatorial election. Other sources told one of us (S. H.) that Z. F. owes his current position to his success as a member of Zulkifli's *tim sukses*.

²⁸ Personal interview with Transparency International activist, I. B., April 8, 2006; personal interview with local journalist K. S., April 7, 2006. Both I. B. and K. S. had done investigative work on this issue.

tendering process and sentenced to three years jail.²⁹ The project itself, meanwhile, remains in limbo (*di-statusquo-kan*, as Jambi locals put it resignedly). As we were finalizing this essay (March 2009), the provincial government had still offered no public explanation for the project's demise.³⁰

BENGKULU

Bengkulu's provincial gubernatorial election was won on October 1, 2005, by Agusrin Maryono and H. M. Syamlan, with a safe margin of 54.1 percent (339,647 votes). The map of power relations in Bengkulu looks similar to that for Jambi, with the same few key people in charge and allied with an informal political and business operator. Businesspersons, political parties, and family relations are important here, too, but to these factors should be added ethnicity. The business operator in this case was a group of "special staff" in the governor's office, not an outsider, as in Jambi. Governor Agusrin was supported by the (Islamic) Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS), but shortly after he was elected, he jumped ship to the Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat), the party of national President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. This party appointed him chairman of its provincial board. The defection caused deep disappointment within PKS, which had, after all, carried Agusrin into the governor's office, and created a rift between Agusrin and his deputy governor, a key figure in PKS.³¹

Clearly Agusrin hoped that his defection to the Partai Demokrat would place him closer to the president, and to the political and financial resources available in Jakarta more broadly.³² Agusrin was seen as a "successful young Bengkulu entrepreneur," apparently mainly involved in the service sector in Jakarta.³³ His image as an enterprising young businessman was a plus in the people's opinion. We were told that the past misdemeanors of provincial career bureaucrats and politicians had left a bad taste in the mouths of voters. Here was a young man, originally from Bengkulu, who had made it in Jakarta and wanted to "come home," promising to "build Bengkulu's economy and improve the people's welfare." Agusrin and his success team made good use of the prevailing weariness among voters by offering a change.

As noted above, ethnicity also played a role in this election. Agusrin belonged to one of Bengkulu's two largest ethnic groups, the Serawai. They dominate South Bengkulu, and are centered around the district of Manna. The other important group in this region is the Rejang, who live in North Bengkulu. Agusrin accordingly won 70 percent of his votes from South Bengkulu. Afterwards, he drew most of his senior

²⁹ "Kasus Korupsi 'Water Boom': Sudiro Lesmana Divonis Tiga Tahun Penjara," *Gatra* 20,XIII (March 29–April 4, 2007): 38.

³⁰ Personal telephone interview with senior official Z. A., February 25, 2009.

³¹ Personal interview with provincial parliamentarian for PKS, A. B. S., June 21, 2006; and personal interview with *Rakyat Bengkulu* journalist, J. E., July 17, 2006.

³² Personal interview with Bengkulu provincial parliamentary fraction leader B. S., July 19, 2006.

³³ Personal interview with journalist J. E., July 17, 2006; personal interview with PKS parliamentarian A. B. S., June 21, 2006; and personal interview with Bengkulu province NGO activist, H. S., July 17, 2006.

provincial officials from Manna in South Bengkulu.³⁴ As a result, activists and academics started making jokes about his preference for people from Manna. They changed the acronym for Human Resources (SDM, *Sumber Daya Manusia*), to *Semua Dari Manna*, or *Everyone From Manna*. At the time of my research, the provincial secretary had not yet been appointed and the position was being filled by the Third Assistant, Samsir Lail, who came from a district in South Bengkulu and owed his appointment to the governor. This was a major career leap for him.³⁵

Deputy Governor H. M. Syamlan did not fit the same pattern. His background as prominent *ulama* in Bengkulu had led to a position within the PKS party. He was of Javanese descent but had lived most of his life in Bengkulu. His religious and ethnic background would certainly appeal to a sector of the electorate, and this was why Agusrin chose him as his running mate. As it happened, the election had to be run a second time because the first one, on June 27, 2005, did not return a majority; this situation and the rerun of a local election was at the time unique in Indonesia. Agusrin faced Muslihan, the former provincial secretary, an ethnic Rejang. Since Agusrin himself was Serawai, and thus lacked drawing power among the Rejang, he calculated that by teaming up with a religious Javanese deputy he might win votes from that substantial community, and he might even get some Rejang votes through the Quran-study groups (*organisasi pengajian*) in North Bengkulu.³⁶ Considering Syamlan's political base and his role in Agusrin's successful election, he should have been given significant authority in the new provincial government, but instead his role was confined to the symbolic and the ceremonial, and when Agusrin defected to the Partai Demokrat, Syamlan felt betrayed and aggrieved. Unlike the deputy governor in Jambi, however, Syamlan did not adopt an oppositionist's role. Instead, he chose to distance himself from government, working out of his official residence and devoting much time to his religious duties.³⁷

The governor's "special staff" was an ad hoc group made up of those who had acted as expert advisors on the governor's success team and, also, advisors from the Partai Demokrat. They not only gave advice but also implemented policy. We were told that the promotion and appointment of senior officials, for example, was discussed here, among members of the "special staff," rather than in the institution that existed for that purpose (*Badan Pertimbangan Jabatan dan Kepangkatan*, *Baperjakat*, Consultation Bureau on Offices and Ranks). The allocation of provincial projects also tended to be "cooked up" by the governor's special staff.³⁸ In addition, they were the governor's spokespersons to the mass media, political parties, and civil-society organizations. They were highly educated, one was even a professor,

³⁴ Personal interview with academic at Hazairin University, A. S., July 25, 2006; personal interview with H. S. Y., academic at University of Bengkulu and member of the provincial election commission, July 18, 2006; and personal interview with D. J., bureaucrat on the provincial planning board, Bappeda, July 20, 2006.

³⁵ Personal interview with academic, H. S. Y., July 18, 2006; and personal interview with a bureau head in the governor's office, H. I., July 21, 2006.

³⁶ Personal interview with academic A. S., July 25, 2006; and personal interview with NGO activist H. S., July 17, 2006.

³⁷ Personal interview with academic at University of Bengkulu, P. S., July 24, 2006; and personal interview with S. B., Bengkulu provincial parliament fraction leader, July 19, 2006.

³⁸ Personal interview with academic, H. S. Y., July 18, 2006; personal interview with Bengkulu provincial parliamentarian, E. I., July 26, 2006; and personal interview with NGO activist, H. S., July 17, 2006.

and Agusrin trusted them, so it is not surprising he gave them important work to do.³⁹

In the provincial parliament, the members of Partai Demokrat supported the governor, and the PKS tended to act like an opposition party, while the other parties (PDI-P, PPP,⁴⁰ PAN) saw themselves as “non-affiliated.” The governor had a working relationship with the chairperson of parliament, but since they came from different parties (the chair was affiliated with PDI-P), and they did not share an ethnic background (the chair was from Palembang), the relationship was not warm. Nevertheless, behind the scenes they knew each other well and supported each other.

The post-election “sand-mining case” will help illuminate the relationship between business and politics in Bengkulu. In fact, sand-mining had started well before Agusrin became governor, but the project became controversial after the mining company, PT Famiaterdio Nagara (PTFN), a foreign enterprise that had won the contract from an iron sands company in Hong Kong, was investigated by provincial police for environmental breaches. PTFN was accused of mining in a forest reserve in South Bengkulu, a violation that led to the arrest of some of the company’s managers.

Significantly, the newly elected governor asked the attorney general’s department to stop the investigation (through a so-called Letter of Order to Stop Investigation, Surat Permintaan Penangguhan Penyidikan, SP3), for he reasoned that the case would damage Bengkulu’s image in the eyes of investors. The governor was being plucky—the case against PTFN had been brought by the forestry minister in Jakarta. The environmental abuse was brought to light by a wide range of groups that included the NGO Perisai, the district parliament in Seluma, the local environmental protection agency (Bapedalda), the local nature conservation agency, and so on, right up to the provincial directorate-general for forest protection and nature conservation, the provincial forestry bureau, and the provincial police chief. The provincial newspaper *Bengkulu Pos* also played a significant role by spotlighting the PTFN case.

Those on the company’s side, meanwhile, were the Seluma district chief, who had issued the mining permit, and the governor, who had stopped the investigation with his SP3. Famiaterdio Nagara was a subsidiary of a Chinese company. The Seluma district chief, Husni Thamrin, had issued the 685-hectare mining concession to PTFN in October 2003, following the issuance of a mining permit by the Directorate-General of General Mining in October 1999, a document that was copied to the Minister for Forestry and Plantations. PTFN had also been granted a permit to transport the concentrate and sell it, primarily to China. About sixteen months later, in February 2005, the Seluma district chief expanded the concession until it covered 3,645 hectares, located partly within the Pasar Talo forest reserve in South Bengkulu. The concession had a term of ten years. Curiously enough, the Seluma district chief had the previous year also issued an iron sands concession to another company in the same area. This company, PT Sriwijaya Alam Lestari (PT SAL), was a domestic concern, and with its 2,383-hectare concession it was to supply a million metric tons

³⁹ Personal interview with academic, P. S., July 24, 2006; and personal interview with parliamentarian S. B., July 19, 2006.

⁴⁰ PDI-P, Partai Demokrat Indonesia-Perjuangan, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle; PPP, Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, the Unity Development Party.

a year to PT Ebdon Resources Inc., another Chinese company, starting in April 2005. So now there were two problems—the overlapping concessions, and mining in a protected area.

The nature reserve was well-protected by law. It had been created in 1985, and the decision to maintain it was reaffirmed as late as June 1999 by the Minister of Forestry and Plantations. But coordination in Jakarta was apparently poor, for in October 1999 the Ministry for Mining issued an exploration license for the Pasar Talo area, a decision that was copied to the forestry minister, who did not respond. In this case, the local authorities failed to raise objections against the violation; in fact, they issued the concessions, as we have noted. Within four months of obtaining its concession, PTFN began to run into problems. The head of the local nature conservation agency (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam) sent them a warning that they had violated the preserve boundaries. Then two environmental NGOs—Links NGO Consortium and Perisai—produced studies documenting the ruination of the forest and beach in the area.

A local PTFN staff member with family links to Perisai told us that Perisai was connected to the rival mining company, PT Sriwijaya Alam Lestari (PT SAL), which had not yet started operations. This NGO was founded shortly after the PTFN sand-mining case surfaced, and by the time one of us (S. H.) visited the Seluma area, it no longer existed. During its brief existence, however, it was effective. Its loud protests against “capitalist exploitation” earned it broad media coverage, and soon it reported PTFN to the Seluma district police chief. The Seluma district parliament also surveyed the mining site and then asked the district chief to halt PTFN’s operations. The district parliamentary chairperson was among the most vigorous opponents. Some said his activism was inspired by a “contribution” he received from the rival company, PT SAL. The hullabaloo originated in the governor’s home area, and repercussions soon reached the provincial level. The two authorities tasked with protecting nature reserves (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam and Bapedalda) held meetings and conducted investigations. The provincial police chief became involved and, as a result of his investigations, three company managers were arrested.

The reason why PTFN was able to continue its operations uninterrupted, despite these protests and judgments, had everything to do with the gubernatorial election. As we saw, this drawn-out process culminated on October 1 with Agusrin winning the governorship of Bengkulu. At the end of August 2005, the provincial environmental agency Bapedalda declared that the Seluma district chief had improperly included 143 hectares of the Pasar Talo reserve in his 3,645 hectare concession to PTFN. He had done this without conducting an environmental impact assessment. A joint team was formed to take further action. Early the next month, the acting governor, Seman Widjojo, wrote to the forestry minister claiming the maps Jakarta used to determine where foreign companies could operate were inaccurate. However, the Bengkulu police chief was already a step ahead; he had begun to interrogate one of the governor’s conservation officials about suspected deviations by PTFN. The joint team, consisting of provincial police, and forestry and conservation officials, surveyed the site in question and declared that PTFN was breaking the law. The police said they would make sure the forestry minister’s order to stop work was obeyed. The Seluma district chief, meanwhile, sent his own report to the governor supporting continued sand-mining—despite contrary reports from his own officials and the district parliament. In November 2005, the provincial police

chief called in a range of people for interrogation, including the PTFN director, the (by now) former caretaker Seluma district chief, Husni Thamrin, and several other district officials concerned with mining. No fewer than twenty witnesses were called, heavy mining equipment was seized, and the investigation was conducted personally by the Bengkulu criminal investigations director.

In December 2005, the newly elected governor, Agusrin, suggested to the forestry minister that the nature reserve be reclassified to allow exploitation, arguing that the area had in reality been used for housing, oil palm and coffee plantations, gardens, and a cemetery since 1963. Some parts of it had even been claimed by personal title certificates.⁴¹ The area could be reclassified as a production forest and then “lent out” to PTFN for mining, he argued. However, the forestry minister had been convinced by the police report and refused to budge. Eventually, three PTFN managers were detained.⁴² The case went to the provincial court and then to the high court in Jakarta. It was at this late moment, when the case was already in Jakarta, that the governor issued his order—the SP3 letter—to stop the investigation.

Locals living around the sand mine protested the arrest of the PTFN managers. They needed the work that was available at the mine site, and they pointed out that the nature reserve no longer functioned as intended.⁴³ Indeed, a visit to the site by one of us (S. H.) confirmed that the reserve was partly planted with oil palm, for which PTFN had paid compensation to the owners.

Why did Governor Agusrin go out on such a limb to support PTFN? One reason is that he needed the mine to realize his promise of real economic growth in his first two and a half years in office. The mine site was also located in South Bengkulu, the source of 70 percent of his votes. Support for the mine remained strong there, and he had explicitly promised economic improvement to his supporters in that region.⁴⁴ The governor also owed a political debt to Husni Thamrin, who had issued the permit to PTFN, since Thamrin had been a key member of his success team. However, according to some NGO activists one of us (S. H.) interviewed, there was also a pecuniary reason. It seems that PTFN made a campaign contribution to the governor. Moreover, the company had signed an agreement with Agusrin, promising to make future “contributions” to the provincial government (through the governor) to the tune of Rp 1500 per ton extracted.⁴⁵ This promised to translate to one and a half billion rupiah (US\$150,000) per year. The governor had to reward the company for this support. The same sources also told us that the governor came under pressure from Jakarta to facilitate an iron sands mine that would feed a steel mill in China. The Chinese company had signed an MoU with the central government.

In late 2008 PTFN was still operating in the park. The case had gone to the provincial court, which declared the mining permit legal. While awaiting the

⁴¹ Letter from Bengkulu governor, Agusrin M. Najamudin, December 13, 2005, no. 522.11/1003/Bapedalda.1, to the forestry minister.

⁴² “Babat Hutan Suaka Alam, Dirut PT Famiaterdio Ditahan,” *Suara Pembaruan*, January 14, 2006.

⁴³ “Hutan Cagar Alam Wilayah Seluma Terancam Gundul,” *Antara*, May 10, 2006.

⁴⁴ Personal interview with parliamentarian B. S., July 19, 2006; personal interview with *Bengkulu Post* journalist, W. R., July 18, 2006; and personal interview with academic S. P., July 24, 2006.

⁴⁵ Interview with secretary to the director of PTFN.

outcome of an appeal lodged by environmental authorities, the company has been allowed to continue digging.⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

Provincial governors during the New Order were long seen as little more than instruments in the hands of a powerful central state. Even if the reality was more complex, few scholars contradicted this rather monistic picture of a state isolated from society.⁴⁷ The post-1998 governor, by contrast, moves in a provincial arena with dynamics of its own. The state is embedded in society, not equally in all its parts, but especially through economic interests that in turn provide employment to many people. The logic of electioneering in a poorly funded and weakly disciplined state has created new forms of political corruption. Whereas in the past governors were bureaucrats who may have worked with businesspersons, now successful entrepreneurs are themselves becoming governors.

The politics that the new breed of governors needs to engage in are democratic in a rough-and-tumble way. In both Jambi and Bengkulu the public won some victories in their battles with the executive while losing others. In Jambi, an elaborate project to construct a water theme park—undertaken as if a government's duty to entertain its citizens was self-evident—came in for criticism as a waste of public funds. At first the governor persisted with the project, evidently because he owed favors to a donor who had supported his election campaign. This could explain why funds were disbursed to the project even after the governor himself had declared it canceled. In the end the contractor client ended up in jail, while the project itself lay idle without a word of explanation. Perhaps, too, the political public, quick to tire of an issue and itself often tainted by fluid partisan interests, was somewhat complicit in this unsatisfactory resolution.

In Bengkulu, the governor, supported by his core ethnic constituency, whose villages were concentrated around the mine site, was able to invoke his insider's knowledge of the bureaucracy in Jakarta to outwit the police through skillful delaying tactics. Partly through the incompetence of overlapping bureaucracies that left a paper trail of contradictory rulings, mining continues in the national park to this day. Thus democracy has brought significant changes to provincial politics, but so far not the thorough accountability to which the public has a right.

Localized controversies erupting after the gubernatorial elections in the provinces of Bengkulu and Jambi have illustrated one of the central dilemmas facing elected officials in newly democratic Indonesia: How to repay their business backers without alienating their voting public. Aspiring officeholders also needed money under the New Order, but it costs a lot more to persuade hundreds of thousands of free voters than it does to influence a few senior officials or parliamentarians. Moreover, post-*Pilkada* elected officials know that the next election will judge them on their economic record. Voters liked the Jambi governor, who had come from a

⁴⁶ "PT Famiaterdio Nagara," *Poros Sumatra* (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia [WALHI] Region Sumatera), August 1, 2008. See <http://poros-sumatera.blogspot.com/2008/08/pt-famiaterdio-nagara.html>, accessed on March 17, 2009.

⁴⁷ One exception was R. William Liddle, "The Politics of Shared Growth: Some Indonesian Cases," *Comparative Politics* 19,2 (January 1987): 127–46. He wrote: "[T]here is much more beneath-the-surface political activity in the New Order than the standard model of military and bureaucratic authoritarianism leads us to expect" (p. 129).

business family, precisely because he promised to be more competent and effective than the stuffy bureaucrats of the past. But his friends in the construction industry were also vital to his electoral success. The Bengkulu governor had friends in the mining sector who helped him into the saddle and who also created jobs that sustained his popularity ratings (despite the environmental damage they were causing). Both these candidates came from wealthy business families. Both spent a good deal of their energy on securing major business deals for their provinces.

Governors conduct their business relationships at a distance, with the aid of informal operators who provide the necessary inside knowledge while preserving an air of respectability. Even so, their business deals have inevitably confronted them with another side of democratization: corrupt favoritism is likely to be exposed by an increasingly vocal public. Both governors found out how uncomfortable such criticism can be, and they had to call on all their skills in public relations and manipulation to forestall failure. The provincial state has become an arena for contestation among a wider range of social forces than was previously evident.

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GOVERNING VILLAGES IN INDONESIA'S COASTAL ZONE

Dorian Fougères

The story is well known: in May 1998, as Indonesia sank deeper into the Asian Financial Crisis, a broad-based social movement demanding the democratization of Indonesian society toppled the seventy-six year-old dictator Suharto and initiated Indonesia's Era of Reformation. One year later, the Indonesian Parliament passed a pair of monumental "regional autonomy" (*otonomi daerah*) laws.¹ Bypassing the country's twenty-seven provinces, these laws transferred directly from the central government in Jakarta to the then-existing 321 district governments substantial decision-making authority and control over material and financial resources.² Implemented at the start of 2001, these decentralizing reforms severed numerous hierarchical links between central and district bureaucracies that had been established during Suharto's New Order. Less well known is that these reforms also significantly rearranged power relations within districts and the villages that constitute them. Despite their broad new mandates, district chiefs (*bupati*) lost the authority to appoint village heads (*kepala desa*), who instead would be directly elected by village residents.³ Residents would also elect the members of the new Village Representative Boards (*Badan Perwakilan Desa*, BPD), which replaced the appointed Village Consultative Assemblies (*Lembaga Musyawarah Desa*, LMD). Together village heads and boards, which previously had had only the right to draft village legislation and budgets, now gained the authority to approve these as well.

The restructuring of village government in Indonesia aimed to make it more responsive to its constituents, and thereby to democratize village development. In this chapter, I explore a case where the reforms strengthened downward relations of accountability, but not enough to dismantle the preexisting networks of patronage and thereby resolve a conflict among villagers over destructive fishing practices. The same relations of accountability, more alarmingly, gave legal form to a desire to

¹ These included two 1999 laws: Law 22 on Regional Government and Law 25 concerning Fiscal Balance between the Central Government and the Regions.

² Law 22 (1999), Chapter IV (Regional Authorities), Article 7. This section grants the central government continued control over diplomacy, defense and security, judicature, monetary and fiscal policy, and religion.

³ Law 22 (1999), Chapter XI (Village), Part 2 (Rural Government), Article 95.

exclude nonlocal Indonesians from access to the village's coral reefs. My aim is to show through ethnographic detail how the democratization of Indonesian society can perpetuate and even generate new relations of subordination. More generally, I argue that analyses of the exercise of state power and social change during the Era of Reformation must include ordinary people who serve as elected officials, yet who simultaneously maintain other distinct identities and occupy ambiguous positions in relation to formal governing apparatuses. These people illustrate that "the Indonesian State" does not exist apart from society. The authoritarian and highly centralized government of Suharto's New Order lent itself to analyses that emphasized charisma and bureaucratic rationality as defining characteristics and boundaries of government. However, this commonsense understanding of "the Indonesian State" as a discrete entity is a discursive effect. In other words, the ongoing perception that the "state" is entirely separate from villagers is the product of specific knowledge about territory, resources, and the population that is put into practice with the intent of creating and maintaining distinctions among the state, the economy, and society.⁴ Scholarly efforts to explain why specific villages have greater or lesser success in democratizing development need to recognize this discursive process, and avoid reifying the "state" and the corresponding blame or praise that is laid at its feet. Examining the overlapping roles and blurred identities of village chiefs in government, the economy, and society provides a more grounded and accurate description of the intersection of development and democracy in the Era of Reformation.

GOVERNMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE COASTAL ZONE

Malakaji is a small village in South Sulawesi's Kariango Archipelago that consists of a pair of islands, Pulau Rantau and Pulau Tetap, and is home to around six hundred ethnically Bugis divers and fishers (two-thirds and one-third of the total, respectively).⁵ This diminutive village (two square kilometers, four thousand people) is surrounded by bountiful coral reefs that stretch for tens of kilometers to the north. Since the late 1960s, it has been a regionally important source of tropical marine commodities, with divers utilizing local and distant waters to produce pearl shells, sea cucumber, live lobster, and, most recently, "live reef food fish" for international markets.⁶ Malakaji became an official village in 2003, and its first-ever head, whom I call Made Ali, was simultaneously a major diving and fishing patron⁷ who underwrote an illegal, destructive fishing practice—the use of dissolved cyanide to catch live fish.⁸ To explore governance and democratization in the village, below I

⁴ Timothy Mitchell, "Society, Economy, and the State Effect," in *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 76–97.

⁵ Because this case explores illegal fishing practices, all names are pseudonyms.

⁶ "Live reef food fish" refers to the large, coral-reef-dwelling fish that are shipped alive to restaurants (especially in Hong Kong), hereafter simply referred to as "live fish."

⁷ A patron is an investor who will cover a substantial portion of the capital and operating costs incurred by his clients, the fishers, in return for a large share of their fishing revenue.

⁸ This involved divers dissolving tablets of sodium or potassium cyanide in plastic squirt bottles filled with seawater. The divers would then dive down to the reefs and, using the long nozzles on the bottles, squirt the target fish with the poisonous solution, temporarily stunning it and making it easy to capture.

examine how Made Ali navigated the legal, economic, and moral dilemmas that his multiple responsibilities—as a village head, a patron, and a businessperson—posed when two conflicts over access to coral reefs surfaced. First, however, some historical context is necessary, to frame these dilemmas.

Historically, Indonesian state institutions have expressed limited interest in fisheries, as compared with two other extractive industries that provided a basis for national industrialization: mining and forestry. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Suharto approved several joint ventures with Japanese corporations to catch and sell shrimp and, secondarily, tuna, and in the mid-1970s he issued a series of decrees concerning the taxation of foreign and domestic investment in fisheries.⁹ However, Suharto only signed a Basic Fisheries Law (BFL) in 1985—nearly two decades after the Basic Mining and Basic Forestry Laws he instituted in 1967.

Consistent with earlier populist narratives, in its preface the BFL identified fisheries as a resource with a major potential to serve as the basis of development, and therefore the increased prosperity of the Indonesian people. Echoing the 1982 UN Law of the Sea, the BFL also excluded foreign citizens and companies from catching fish in the nation's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) without special permission.¹⁰ But existing fisheries laws, it further reasoned, had too narrow of a scope and could not meet the needs of development in general, or the development of national law in particular. The BFL thus marked the onset of the nationwide rationalization of fisheries exploitation in the name of development. The legislation established several new areas of central government intervention, including a catch-permit system, the regular collection of economic and social statistics, a research and development program, and quality standards for seafood exports.

In addition to those technologies of government, Article 7 of the 1985 BFL advanced the national criminalization of destructive fishing practices. This process began in 1980 and 1982, when Suharto responded to the violent protests of small-scale fishers by banning industrial shrimp trawlers from eleven of Indonesia's twelve seas.¹¹ Suharto had also issued general guidelines for environmental management in 1982 and signed legislation in 1984 concerning marine resource management in the nation's EEZ. The legislation outlawed the use of explosives and poisons to catch fish and established a potential fine of seventy-five million rupiah per violation.¹² The 1985 BFL expanded the scope of violations to include the use of any technology that destroyed fish habitat, including the crowbars commonly used by divers to overturn or break apart corals when extracting various organisms. It also increased the potential fine to one hundred million rupiah and added the possibility of ten years of

⁹ See Nicholas Zachman, "Indonesian Fisheries Development and Management," *Journal of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada* 30,12 (1973): 2335–40; and Presidential Decree No. 8, 1975, and Minister of Agriculture Decree Nos. 424 and 425, 1977.

¹⁰ "Exclusive economic zone" is a UN-recognized construct that refers to the marine territory between the edge of a nation's territorial seas (i.e., twelve nautical miles from the coast) and two hundred nautical miles from the coast, over which the country maintains sovereign rights to explore, exploit, conserve, and manage all natural resources.

¹¹ Presidential Decree No. 39, 1980, covered the waters of Sumatra and Java, and Presidential Instruction 11, 1982, extended this ban nationwide, except for the Arafura Sea in eastern Indonesia, where the president had granted certain Japanese companies a special license (Conner Bailey, "Lessons from Indonesia's 1980 Trawler Ban" *Marine Policy* 21,3 (1997): 225–36.

¹² Government Law No. 4, 1982, and Government Law No. 15, 1984.

imprisonment. At the same time, the law aimed explicitly to increase the labor opportunities and raise the living standards of “small-scale fishers” (*nelayan kecil*, defined in Article 10 as people who meet their daily needs through fishing), and exempted them from permit and taxation requirements.

Fisheries legislation continued to expand over the next decade. New laws elaborated on permit and taxation systems, ships’ “flags of convenience,” international ports and shipment, government observers, and fishing cooperatives. During this period, international attention to biological diversity increased significantly as well. Suharto signed the Conservation of Biological Resources and Ecosystems Law in 1990, sandwiched between the 1987 Brundtland Report and the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development.¹³ Five years later, Indonesia’s ministers of agriculture and trade referenced this law and issued a pair of decrees that restricted the capture and export of the humphead wrasse fish (*Cheilinus undulatus*).¹⁴ After reiterating that national fisheries management aimed to produce the greatest possible benefit for the people of Indonesia, the first of the decrees noted that humphead wrasse constitute a high-value fisheries commodity, and this is a good thing. However, the minister of agriculture continued, fishers and fishing companies polluted the waters by using poisons or chemicals to capture these fish, thus destroying surrounding organisms and entire coral reefs. They had also over-fished the wrasse, making it internationally endangered.¹⁵ Therefore, in an effort to protect, rehabilitate, and improve the reef fishery, the minister of agriculture outlawed the capture of humphead wrasse without a special permit issued in Jakarta, and cited the 1985 BFL penalties, while the minister of trade prohibited the export of humphead wrasse without an official permit. A subregulation issued by the directorate general of fisheries limited the permissible size of fish for capture or sale to between one and three kilograms; those smaller would have to be aquacultured to the “consumption size” before export, while those larger would have to be released.¹⁶

Notably, the minister of agriculture’s decree again favored small-scale fishers (now identified as “traditional” [*nelayan tradisional*] and defined by the limited size of their vessel or boat’s engine). It permitted these fishers to extract the wrasse without a permit, so long as they did not employ equipment that destroyed the fish stock or its habitat. A legislative revision the next year (1996), however, required traditional fishers to obtain permits from the provincial fisheries chief.¹⁷ Furthermore, every interdistrict, interprovincial, or export shipment of fish would require authorizing letters from the district fisheries chief, provincial fisheries chief, and director general, respectively.

The next major development in the history of Indonesian fisheries came in October 1999, when newly elected President Wahid created the cabinet-level Department of Marine Exploration and Fisheries (renamed the Department of

¹³ Government Law No. 5, 1990.

¹⁴ See Minister of Agriculture Decree No. 375/Kpts/IK.250/5/95; and Minister of Trade Decree No. 94/Kp/V/95.

¹⁵ The Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species lists humphead wrasse under Appendix II, which includes species “not necessarily now threatened with extinction, but that may become so unless trade is closely controlled.”

¹⁶ Director General of Fisheries Decree No. HK.330/Dj.8259/95.

¹⁷ Director General of Fisheries Decree No. HK.330/S3.6631/96.

Marine Affairs and Fisheries in 2000).¹⁸ Wahid charged the department with managing sustainably the national wealth embodied in marine resources and fisheries, as well as supporting related community institutions and businesses. This initiative included further standardization of official duties, education, and training, among other things. The department's first minister, Suwarno Kusumaatmadja (former minister of the environment), described the department's duty as countering the New Order's bias toward land-based development and the sub-optimal use of marine resources by promoting fishing and fish farming; increasing the prosperity of coastal communities; and using the maritime sector as a basis for moving the country out of its economic crisis.¹⁹

As mentioned in the introduction, in June 1999 the legal structure of Indonesian government metamorphosed when the People's Consultative Assembly passed, and President Habibie signed, the dual regional autonomy laws. In their preambles, each law justified its existence in terms of increasing democracy, participation, equity, justice, diversity, and accountability relative to New Order conditions. Parts two and three of the Regional Government Law meant that heads and boards now shared authority to craft legislation, as well as shared accountability downward to their electorate through direct elections and an annual report. The law also ended the financial dependency of villages on district block grants. Villages now had the authority to derive original revenues from things like "village-owned enterprises" and "village assets." The law also expanded the authority of village heads by charging them with duties that included, among other things, developing the village's economy and community life, maintaining peace and order among villagers, and peacefully resolving disputes among villagers. Finally, the Regional Government Law also restructured the territorial jurisdictions of Indonesian government. The central government retained its authority over the "exploration, exploitation, and management of marine wealth" and over enforcement in the nation's EEZ. Districts, however, gained the same authority over the territory between the coast and four nautical miles at sea, and provinces over the territory between four and twelve miles (i.e., the limit of the nation's territorial seas), although provinces still had to comply with and uphold national laws in these coastal zones.

In summary, two fields of government framed the dilemmas Made Ali would face during his first year in office. Elaborated over thirty years, the first field encompassed marine resources. It involved rationales of resource exploitation, environmental protection, and populist development, and institutionalized the use of technologies like statistics and penal codes. Several regulations restricted the live fish trade, including the use of dissolved cyanide to capture fish. Elaborated in a period of crisis, the second field encompassed regional government. It invoked democracy and justice as rationales, devolved control over marine territories, and institutionalized the use of direct elections and autonomous revenue generation. The territorial conflicts over access to Malakaji's reefs emerged from these superimposed fields of government.

¹⁸ For the legislative history, see Presidential Decrees Nos. 355/M/1999, 136/1999, 145/1999, 147/1999, 165/2000, and 177/2000.

¹⁹ See Republic of Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Department History, at <http://www.dkp.go.id>, last accessed in December 2007.

SUPERPOSITIONED

Made Ali is the dexterous man who stepped into office on January 1, 2003, as Malakaji's directly elected head. Prior to taking office, Made Ali had accumulated a fortune by facilitating the production of live fish and other tropical marine commodities. As a child he had accompanied his father, an established patron himself, on diving trips around eastern Indonesia in search of pearl and other valuable shells. In the early 1980s, Made Ali used the financial capital he had amassed to get married and, then, with a small grant from a shell buyer in Makassar, to sponsor his own client captains and to lead his own seasonal expeditions through the country's extensive waters.

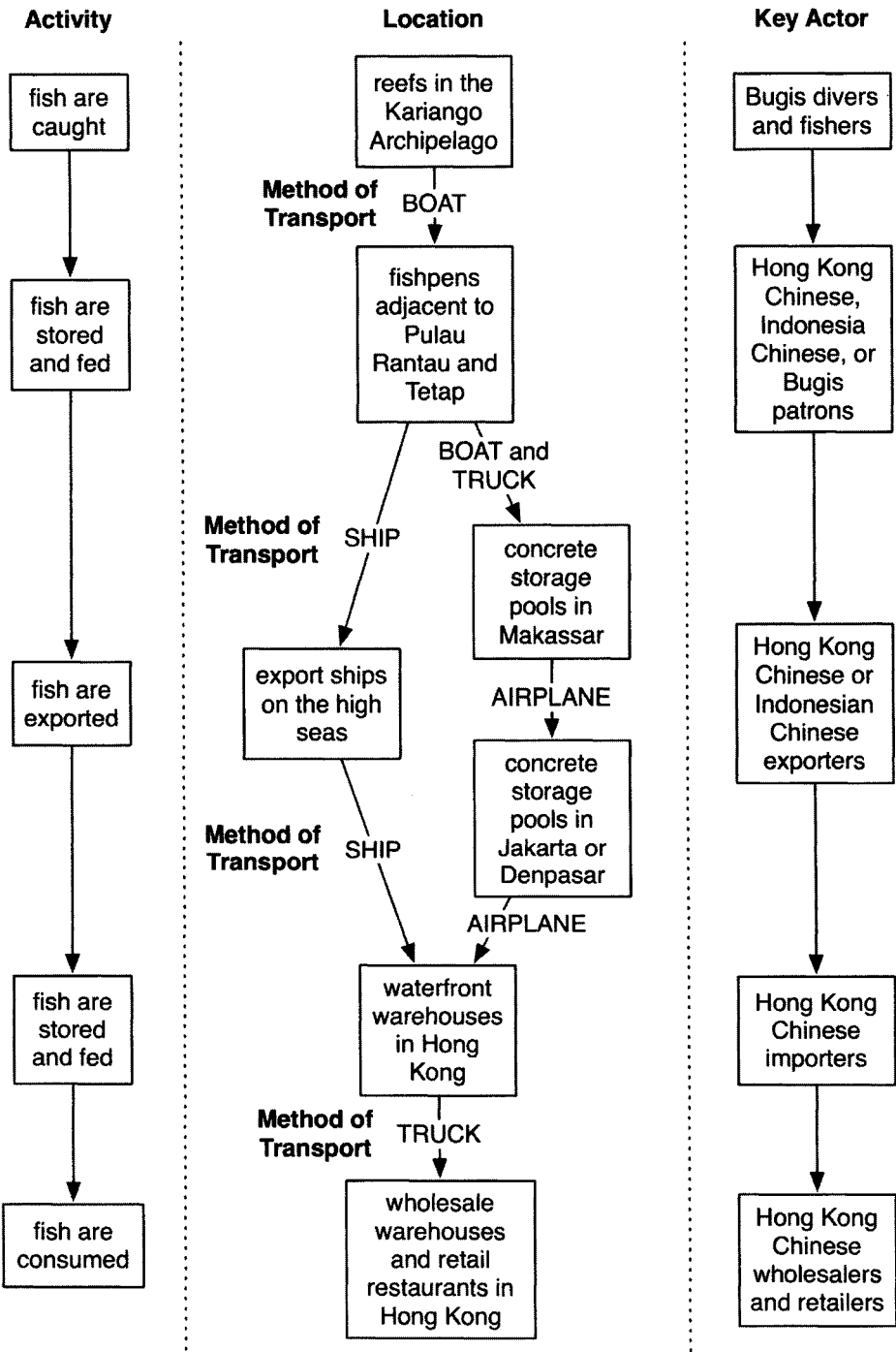
A market for live fish began developing in the Kariango Archipelago around 1990. During the first years, it only involved foreign catch boats that came from Hong Kong and employed Bajonese divers from Makassar, along with a handful of local divers to serve as reef guides. Once the migrant Chinese built fishpens to hold their catch temporarily in the archipelago for pickup by a dedicated export ship, entrepreneurs from the islands got involved. Made Ali was one of the first, and in 1994 began to serve as a patron for line-boat captains from Pulau Tetap, Malakaji's smaller island, who wanted to catch and sell this new commodity.²⁰ Two years later he began contracting with an Indonesian-Chinese marine commodity exporter from the island of Flores, where several of his relatives resided. With a cash advance of five million rupiah, Made Ali built his own fishpens in front of Pulau Tetap and began holding the fish caught by his clients for pickup by a Hong Kong ship arranged through his sponsor in Flores. Around this time he also began to encourage his dive-boat captains—all from the village's larger island, Pulau Rantau, where he also resided—to turn their attention to live fish. In 1998 Made Ali paid off his debt to the exporter in Flores and began to establish new credit-based contracts with the airplane-based exporters in Makassar, who were entering the market during the Asian Financial Crisis (see Figure 1, on the next page).²¹ By the time Made Ali took office, he was the village's second-largest patron and, via his client captains, supported around thirty-five fishers and fifty divers.

For most of his career, Made Ali had avoided becoming entangled with law enforcement. In 1996, however, the Australian Navy caught and destroyed several of his diving boats that were collecting sea cucumber in the disputed international waters southeast of Nusa Tenggara, an event that encouraged him to focus more of his resources on the live fish available in uncontested waters. This marked the start of his involvement with destructive fishing practices. In preceding years his line-boat captains had caught humphead wrasse, but since they were all small-scale fishers who used hook-and-line techniques to catch midsize fish, this was permissible. However, once Made Ali's dive-boat captains entered the market, he supplied them with cyanide for capturing fish, thus linking them all in the crime of destroying the nation's fish stocks and reefs, irregardless of the their small-scale status. In early 2002, officers from the nearest Water and Air Police branch, on the Sulawesi mainland, arrested one of Made Ali's client divers for using cyanide. Responsible for

²⁰ Line boats employ hook-and-line fishers, compared to dive boats that employ divers to catch fish.

²¹ Hong Kong importers paid Indonesian exporters in US-dollar-denominated values, hence in Indonesia the plummeting value of the rupiah generated a corresponding spike in the nominal value of live fish and attracted numerous opportunistic businesspeople.

Figure 1: The Malakaji–Hong Kong Live Reef Food Fish Commodity Chain



the welfare of his client, Made Ali went to Makassar and had the captain released in return for his own incarceration. It turned out that the arresting officers lacked enough evidence to prosecute the captain (they had his equipment, but not his catch, and no eyewitness), and the 1985 BFL made no provisions about the culpability of the people who financially sponsored destructive diving practices. But the officers nevertheless used the captain's equipment to hassle Made Ali, and extorted from him more than twenty million rupiah (around US\$2,000, at a time when an entry-level bureaucrat's monthly salary was about US\$100).

Made Ali's encounter with state authorities in the coastal zone fit within a broadening conflict in Malakaji over the use of cyanide to capture live fish. The practice had become widespread in the Kariango Archipelago in the late 1990s, when most of Pulau Rantau's divers—not just Made Ali's—entered the live fish trade (other patrons had also had vessels destroyed by the Australian Navy in 1996). Cyanide was popular because divers could catch two to four times more fish, and more valuable species of fish, than fishers using hook-and-line methods. By the dawn of the new millennium, hook-and-line fishers from Pulau Tetap began complaining to their patrons—including Made Ali—about declining fish yields, which they blamed on the use of cyanide. Anecdotes abounded. Rahim, a line-boat captain who began catching live fish for Made Ali in 1996, recalled that he and his two-person crew used to catch seventy kilograms of fish in one day using their hooks and lines, when traveling to fishing sites only twenty minutes away using a five-horsepower boat engine. But in 2003, using a twenty-horsepower engine to drive to reefs located between one and three hours away, he would catch only fifteen kilograms of fish. As Rahim's capital and operating costs increased, yet yields from his fishing operations diminished, his indebtedness to Made Ali rose steadily.

Although no scientific survey of Malakaji's reefs existed to establish baseline data, it is very likely that divers' widespread application of cyanide caused coral reefs to bleach (a defensive response to pollution) and reduced fish habitat, as it had elsewhere in the country.²² Made Ali himself estimated in 2003 that Malakaji's twenty-two patrons produced only about three tons of live fish in each of the season's two-week fishing periods (called a *turo*, which corresponds with the new moon). He contrasted this with his first years in the business in the mid-1990s, when four large patrons employing only hook-and-line fishers from Pulau Tetap regularly caught more than ten tons of fish in a single *turo*. He predicted that the fishery would be destroyed in less than a decade, and planned to move to the mainland within one or two years. Following the example of earlier emigrant patrons, there he would invest in less risky ventures—land, houses, stores, gardens, mosques, and Islamic schools.

In subsequent years, complaints intensified as allegations about the effects of cyanide use became entangled with territoriality. The rapid entry of Pulau Rantau's divers into the live fish trade meant that some 350 new people using cyanide began extracting fish from Kariango's reefs in the space of three or four years, and quickly outnumbered the roughly 250 fishers from Pulau Tetap. The opposing trends of increased fishing pressure, on the one hand, and declining numbers of bountiful

²² See Evan Edinger et al., "Reef Degradation and Coral Biodiversity in Indonesia: Effects of Land-based Pollution, Destructive Fishing Practices, and Changes over Time," *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 36,8 (1998): 617–30; P. Mous et al., "Cyanide Fishing on Indonesian Coral Reefs for the Live Food Fish Market—What is the Problem?" in *Collected Essays on the Economics of Coral Reefs*, ed. Herman Cesar (Kalmay: CORDIO, 2000), pp. 69–76.

sites, on the other, meant that fishers and divers began to meet regularly on the same reefs. Arguments soon emerged. Rahim and other fishers from Pulau Tetap explained that on occasion they had cast their baited lines on a particular reef, only to notice a short while later that air bubbles were rising near their boat. These telltale signs of divers, whose boats might be a fair distance away, infuriated the fishers, who claimed that the divers deliberately dove beneath them and captured the fish that their baited hooks had attracted, before the fish had a chance to bite.

Other cases of territoriality involved knowledge about reef geography and conditions. Between the late 1960s and early 1990s, about one-third of Pulau Tetap's fishers had caught the same fish species now sold alive, except they had sold them salted or fresh. During this time they accumulated detailed knowledge of the area's reefs. In a 2003 interview, one senior fisher from the island recited the names of twenty-seven reef complexes in the surrounding area, starting with those just south and ending with those several hours to the north. As the availability of fish on commonly known sites declined around the turn of the millennium, dive-boat captains began following line-boat captains out to sea so as to find isolated reefs that remained in prime condition. Fishers deeply resented this, feeling that divers were exploiting them and their ancestral knowledge, and contaminating what healthy reefs remained.

The conflict between divers in Pulau Rantau and fishers in Pulau Tetap proved difficult to resolve. Each side respected the other's need to make a living and feed their families. Residents of the two islands also had a high rate of intermarriage, with many divers who grew up on Pulau Tetap moving to Pulau Rantau (and vice versa) after marriage.²³ With so many familial connections, criticizing the activities of one group often meant indirectly blaming your uncle or nephew. Although these bonds helped defuse potential violence, they also frustrated the calls of Pulau Tetap's fishers and patrons for an end to cyanide diving. Some patrons from Pulau Rantau also blurred the islands' social-occupational divisions and made resolution more complex. Those with the largest and most established networks, like Made Ali, had client divers in Pulau Rantau and fishers in Pulau Tetap. For these dual patrons, their fishers progressively lost the ability to pay back the money they borrowed to go to sea. But their fishers' growing debts were offset by the large profits that these patrons made off of their divers who used cyanide. So Made Ali and other dual-patrons continued to downplay the conflict and support the use of cyanide.

State officials and institutions were ineffective mediators. While the navy and the Department of Fisheries rarely patrolled the Kariango Archipelago, the Air and Water Police had regular interaction with residents. They had a branch office at the nearby mainland port, and also controlled the district's main docks in Areba, through which live fish passed if they were destined for airplane-export from Makassar. Between 2001 and 2004 the branch also stationed an officer on Pulau Puncak, adjacent to Pulau Tetap, in a rented room that doubled as a base of operations. But the branch's only speedboat remained at the branch office, where officers pointed out that fluctuating annual budgets made patrolling irregular. Regardless, fishers and patrons from Pulau Tetap did not trust or respect police officers. They complained that the police seldom bothered even to try and enforce the law. Furthermore, these fishers commented on the few occasions when police did capture divers with cyanide, they sought payoffs rather than delivering them to the

²³ A newly married Bugis man customarily moved into the house of his wife's family.

judiciary for trial, and the divers returned to using cyanide on the reefs the next day. "There is no *reformasi* here," one frustrated fisher asserted in a 2003 interview.

Around the end of the 2001–02 fishing season (roughly April), Pulau Tetap's fishers and patrons decided that they had to try something different. Led by Haji Hamzah, an elder patron known for expressing his opinion, they drafted an anonymous letter that accused Pulau Rantau's divers of using cyanide, and local police officers of taking bribes to ignore this destructive practice. They asked the district government to improve law enforcement in the archipelago. The letter made its way to the office of Daeng Abdul Rasak, a representative in the District House of Representatives, who had been born in the archipelago yet lived his entire adult life on the mainland, who then passed it on to the District Chief, Mohammed Ramli. Ramli arranged a meeting on Pulau Rantau, not Pulau Tetap, weeks later. His sub-chief (*camat*) from the mainland represented him (Ramli did not attend), along with the warden (*lurah*) of Kariango. Also in attendance were the heads of the district-level Department of Fisheries, army, and police, along with Iskandar—the chief of the mainland Water and Air Police branch who had incarcerated Made Ali earlier that year. More than a dozen other fishing and diving patrons from both Pulau Rantau and Tetap attended, including Made Ali, along with as many fishers and divers as could cram into and around the doors of the village office's meeting room.

The meeting did not go well. The letter had apparently insulted the head of the police.²⁴ When his turn came to discuss cyanide diving, he confronted the islanders. Speaking in Buginese, he called for witnesses to come forth and talk about what was happening, even calling directly on a prosperous patron who had had several captains arrested. But nobody did. This upset him further, and he stormed something along the lines of, "Why, if I come to Pulau Rantau, are people afraid to talk to me, but if a thousand police come to Pulau Tetap, nobody would be scared? This shows that divers are hiding something." Nothing was resolved by the time he returned to the mainland. Reflecting on the event in 2003, fishers and divers and their patrons (including the man called on directly) explained to me that they had remained silent either because they did not want to accuse anyone in public or feared incriminating themselves.

Malakaji's major patrons met on their own about two weeks later. Even though they disagreed about cyanide's ecological effects, they agreed to try and minimize conflicts at sea. They then told their clients that if a line-boat had set up on a reef, no dive-boat was to come within fifty meters of it, and vice versa. The arrangement held, but did not solve the conflict, fishers explained. Divers would still follow and find them at sea, and even though they now waited at a distance while the fishers worked on a reef, once the fishers departed the divers would set to work on that same reef with their cyanide. Fishers had told their patrons, including Made Ali, as much.

Despite Made Ali's involvement in this conflict, he remained a popular patron and village figure, and handily won the village-chief election at the end of 2002. Looking back, he claimed that he never wanted to be the village head, but, after so many people asked him to run for the office, he finally agreed. His initial apprehension seemed prescient when the conflict between divers and fishers surfaced again in early 2003. On March 5, District Chief Ramli came and gave a

²⁴ I was never able to interview him, and the remainder of this paragraph is based on three accounts of his speech, including one from Haji Hamzah.

public speech on Pulau Rantau, and repeatedly mentioned destructive fishing practices. A former law professor at Hasanuddin University in Makassar, Ramli was a widely respected and well-liked politician entering his tenth and final year as a Jakarta-approved leader who had successfully spanned the New Order and *Reformasi* eras. He had come to Pulau Rantau to inaugurate the Kariango Archipelago's official status as a *kecamatan*, a subdistrict administrative unit, and its four new constituent villages, including Malakaji.

After co-signing a series of documents and swearing in new officials, Ramli doled out advice and admonitions, and a few jokes, in a fifteen-minute closing speech. With his audience crammed into a former classroom, he spoke in Indonesian and repeated himself in Bugis so that the dozens in attendance could understand him. He started out by reiterating the national trope that island inhabitants are dependent on fishing and have no economic alternatives, and warned that people in Kariango would not be able to fish into the future if they used bombs and cyanide on the reefs. Then his speech took a turn, and he began projecting a bright, democratic outlook on the future. Today was a different era of government, he explained—it was the era of regional autonomy. The district chief and sub-chief, and the district police chief, were to be accessible to anyone. People and the government needed each other, and with community participation and support the government could work to get anything for its constituents. Interspersing his arguments with examples, Ramli circled back to critique destructive fishing practices three more times by the end of his lecture. At the time I thought Made Ali, dressed in his beige state uniform, looked notably pale.

It did not take long for the police to bring renewed attention to Made Ali's activities. In early April officers arrested Firman, Made Ali's son-in-law and a former client captain who had recently become a small patron himself. Detained when preparing to leave the mainland docks in Areba and drive to Makassar, Firman and his partner Yusuf had humphead wrasse in the truck they were driving but no permit for these fish and, crucially, an air compressor used for diving. The exporter in Makassar, furious with Yusuf and Firman, bribed the police with two computers, worth about six million rupiah, in exchange for his truck's release, but nothing else. After two days in the district jail, Yusuf paid his own way out. Firman, however, could not. Although Made Ali's wife actually went to the district station and resolved the matter the next day, the seven million rupiah she paid the police chief was Made Ali's money.

During a serendipitous discussion a week later, Made Ali confided to me that his contradictory positions as a businessman trying to make a profit as a patron who facilitated the use of cyanide, and as a state official responsible for eliminating this same practice, made him uncomfortable. I passed many nights as a guest in his home, and one night I was just falling asleep on a large rattan mat in the upstairs common room when Made Ali not so quietly whispered from the door, "Pak Durian, have any cigarettes?," knowing I always kept some handy for interviews. It must have been near midnight, and moonlight shone through the open windows into the otherwise dark room. "*Iyek, punya, silahkan,*" I replied ("Yes, I do, please"), sitting up to rummage blearily through a few belongings, and then extend an opened pack of *Surya* to my host. "I just came from the police post, all the shops are already closed," Made Ali explained, the half-light illuminating his sheepish grin. He sat down on the opposite side of the mat and then, with a little crackling and a puff of smoke, sent the scent of clove through the room. He reclined and began smoking deeply, staring at

the ceiling. Breaking the silence moments later, he confessed, "I do not like being village head, Pak Durian. I get stressed." He paused, still staring at the ceiling, and continued, "I am happier just running my fish business. If the community asks me to be chief again, I will not do it." He went on to explain that patrons and fishers from Pulau Tetap were planning a group protest at the District House of Representatives, and that he had responsibility for resolving disputes in the village. In the end the would-be protesters never mobilized, but Made Ali had taken their threat seriously.

Later that month, Made Ali began to reform his practices. He warned his eight dive-boat captains that he would no longer bail them out if the police caught them, and encouraged them to stop using cyanide and to dive for commodities other than live fish. For the time being he would, however, continue buying any live fish they caught, if they did choose to continue using cyanide. At that point two of his captains decided to stop catching live fish and focus anew on making regional trips in search of sea cucumber and valuable shells, while the remainder continued to catch live fish. Shortly after this event, I departed for six months of research in Southeast Sulawesi, beginning in the early summer of 2003.

The situation evolved during my time away. A few weeks before I returned, Made Ali had stopped entirely buying live fish from divers, and had given his remaining six live-fish clients the choice of either extracting other marine commodities or transferring to a new patron. After my return he explained that two more of his dive-boat captains had returned to extracting sea cucumber. The four others requested to be transferred as clients to his nephew, a prodigious young patron who, like Made Ali had done for years (and still did), regularly gave "friendship and understanding money" to policemen in the islands, on the mainland, and in Makassar, as a way of proactively avoiding harassment and arrest. Upon probing, however, I found that Made Ali did not entirely sever the bond of patronage with the four captains: while the captains sold their fish to Made Ali's nephew, who lent them credit to cover operational costs, he continued to own their capital debt, and behind closed doors split the profits made on these fish with his nephew.

The preceding narrative illustrates how Made Ali was super-positioned as a prosperous businessman, a respected patron, and an elected official once he took office in January 2003. As his first year wore on, he negotiated his own balance of those interests and obligations. This involved disguising his profits, paying off the police, responding to the concerns of the district chief and village fishers, and ostensibly upholding national law. Nevertheless, the conflict over cyanide diving and reef access persisted, and the line fishers and their patrons from Pulau Tetap remained marginalized relative to the divers and their patrons from Pulau Rantau.

EMBODYING THE STATE

After taking office in late 2002, Made Ali soon had to negotiate compromises not just among his village constituents and state institutions, but between divers from Pulau Rantau and other Indonesian citizens. In September 2002, three boats from Madura had entered the waters of the Kariango Archipelago. The initial encounter with them was bizarre, according to Hasan, one of a handful of men on Pulau Rantau who bought and sold small amounts of live fish on the open market rather than through contracting. One day the Madurese boats arrived and anchored about 150 meters south of Pulau Rantau, where Hasan first noticed their distinctive painting,

shape, and fittings from his house on shore. For three hours nobody came to land to introduce themselves. Finally he got into his own boat, drove over, and asked what they were doing. They asked him if there were sea cucumber and lobster available in nearby waters. Hasan said there were, and, after they asked him to tell them more, he boarded their ship and spent some time telling them stories about catches and conditions. The Madura fishers said they liked what they heard, Hasan offered to buy the lobster and sea cucumber they caught, and a partnership spontaneously formed. Hasan took the three boat captains to meet Kariango's warden (recall that it only officially converted from the lower-level *kelurahan* to a *kecamatan* in 2003). The captains negotiated to pay the warden, collectively, 200,000 rupiah (US\$20) in return for permission to dive on the area's reefs. The boats, each with a captain and nine crew members, then went to work on the reefs. A week later three more captains arrived, paid a nominal sum to the warden, and also began selling to Hasan. They sold their catch to him roughly twice a month, when they came to shore for a few days to buy fuel and food, and to acquire and chop the timber used to smoke *tripang* (sea cucumber) while at sea.

Divers who lived on the southern end of the island took notice. The divers from Madura used expensive scuba tanks when they dove, something Pulau Rantau's divers had stopped using in the late 1980s in favor of newer and cheaper air-compressor diving technologies. Scuba tanks allowed the Madurese divers to reach greater depths than could Pulau Rantau's divers, and extract significant volumes of otherwise inaccessible lobster and sea cucumber. Hasan noted that each boat sold him around four hundred kilograms of sea cucumber in its two months in the archipelago, including many smaller varieties that Pulau Rantau's divers did not bother to extract. According to Hasan, a few weeks after the Madurese divers arrived, divers from Pulau Rantau began approaching them at sea and telling them to stop working on the archipelago's reefs, that "the sea here is our area" (*laut di sini wilayah kami*). When Hasan asked around, the divers told him that the Madurese were using cyanide to catch lobster, and that they did not want people from "outside" (*dari luar*), like the Madurese, coming and destroying the reefs. Verbal disputes over territorial access continued to surface sporadically on the reefs until the Madurese divers went home in early November, shortly before Ramadan.

During his first month in office, Made Ali proposed that the five-member Rural Representative Board (RRB) pass an ordinance requiring any vessel from outside the area (e.g., from Java, Madura, or other parts of Sulawesi) to pay 200,000 rupiah for permission to extract commodities from the archipelago's waters. Similar "small pass" agreements like the one he proposed had been common in villages in Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara, and Papua as long as divers whom I interviewed could remember (including divers who had already retired). In the past, these fishers explained, such an agreement might have been written into village law, but this was not essential. The practice constituted more of an ethic of access than a regulation: divers felt obliged to report themselves and pay a small fee if they planned to spend time in the waters of a distant village, otherwise they would be "stealing" (*mencuri*) that village's marine commodities.²⁵ Made Ali justified his proposal by explaining that today was

²⁵ An ethic of access consists of a local sense of the "rightful distribution" of access and ownership to a resource at a particular moment in history, which is not treated explicitly in the tenets of traditional law but constitutes an accepted value within a community. Nancy Lee Peluso, "Fruit Trees and Family Trees in an Anthropogenic Forest: Ethics of Access, Property

the era of regional autonomy, and this meant that it was his duty to help the village make money "from below" because there was no longer enough "from above." People had elected him because they believed that he could develop the village's economy. After members of the board consulted with the subdistrict head, who confirmed the legality of turning the customary practice into a regulatory technology, they did as Made Ali asked and passed the ordinance.

The decision was prescient. In the middle of February 2003, a fleet of fifteen boats from Madura arrived at Pulau Rantau and wanted to start collaborating again with Hasan. Before they could begin, Made Ali informed them of the new ordinance. The captains complied and altogether paid three million rupiah to the village's treasurer in the village office. But within a week, Made Ali had divers from the island's south end, including a few of his own, coming to complain at his house in the evenings, after *maghrib* (the period of Islamic prayer at sunset) and dinner. They wanted Made Ali to revoke the right of the boats to operate in local waters.

Several evenings later, Made Ali called a meeting between the two groups but engaged them separately, first talking with Pulau Rantau's divers and then with the divers from Madura, accompanied by Hasan. The divers from the island claimed that those from Madura were stealing all the sea cucumber, clearing out deep and shallow waters alike, and that the Madurese's payment of the ordinance's required was irrelevant. After meeting with the Madurese divers, Made Ali proposed that they could stay, but could only gather sea cucumber in the deeper waters that Pulau Rantau's divers had difficulty reaching with their compressors. This satisfied his clients and village constituents. Furthermore, based on Hasan's conviction that the dispute stemmed partly from other patrons' jealousy of his monopoly over the Madurese catches, Made Ali proposed that the visiting captains sell to other traders, too. The captains from Madura agreed to do so.

In an interview with me the next day, Arifin, a former partner of Made Ali, spoke critically of Pulau Rantau's divers. He was Made Ali's age and had also dived throughout eastern Indonesia. He had tried to dissuade the island's divers from protesting, but did not want to intrude too much in their business. He pointed out to me that their claims had changed between September and February—the first set of claims alleged an illegal practice (using cyanide), while the second did not—and, regardless, neither provided a sound justification for excluding the Madura divers. First, nobody had evidence that the Madurese used cyanide to catch lobster and thus broke the law. Second, Arifin continued, the divers were hypocritical. Pulau Rantau's own divers—like himself—were the ones who had picked the area clean of sea cucumber over the past decades, and continued doing this now; the boats from Madura were not the reason for declining catches. Furthermore, as Hasan and other interviewees echoed, fishers and divers from Malakaji had been exploiting the reefs in other parts of Indonesia for decades, and in the past people from other parts of the country had worked in the area's waters without trouble. The country's waters were the shared property of all Indonesian citizens, and Pulau Rantau's divers had no right to deny other people access to their reefs.²⁶ The divers who complained, Arifin alleged, were motivated by jealousy—a misguided feeling that, he emphasized,

Zones, and Environmental Change in Indonesia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38,3 (1996): 510–48.

²⁶ The 1945 Constitution, Article 33, Sections 2 and 3, is the basis of this legally sound claim.

Islam forbade. The Madurese divers could not be faulted for their success, it was their *rejek*i, the fate and fortune that Allah granted them.

The attempted articulation of island residence and control over the reefs illustrates that a "sedentarist metaphysic"²⁷ had emerged in Malakaji since the arrival of the Madurese divers the previous September. This consisted of the essentializing, naturalizing belief that Malakaji's people, culture, and territory had been and continued to be isomorphic, and thus that Indonesian geography consisted of discrete segments. Such beliefs have underwritten violent exclusion from resources in other parts of Indonesia.²⁸ In Malakaji this metaphysic was a key element in discursive debates about who belonged, who had rights, and who had access—in other words, debates about autochthons and aliens.²⁹ Based on their birthplace, ethnicity, and residence, the protestors self-identified as autochthons who had special moral and material rights to the reefs. By contrast, the visitors—variously labeled "the Madurese" or "people from afar" or "people from outside"—were aliens whose activities were deemed illegitimate. In this way, the divers attempted to locate the problem of reef over-exploitation in the bodies of those who came from elsewhere.

Made Ali's compromise fell apart within a month. In the middle of March, he told me that other patrons were inciting divers to complain to him. I asked whether this was because Made Ali had colluded with Hasan to buy the lobster (although not the sea cucumber) from five visiting captains. No, he explained, they were alleging that he had appropriated the three million rupiah paid by the Madurese to the village to comply with the access ordinance. Made Ali felt insulted by this accusation—he was an influential patron who helped his clients in many ways. The sum of money, more so, was paltry. In the late 1990s, he bragged to me, he sometimes made fifty million rupiah in one sale (US\$5,000), so much income that he could "wash with money" and amaze his friends in Makassar; three million rupiah was not even enough to buy a new boat hull, he said disgustedly. Furthermore, he felt he had reasonably balanced the divers' concerns with concern for the village's economy. To prove his critics wrong, soon after our conversation he returned three million rupiah to the Madurese divers, apologized to them for the demands of his citizens, and told them he could not condone their continued operation in the archipelago's waters. He also told the village board to withdraw the "access" legislation they had jointly passed (though they did not), saying it looked ridiculous to have village regulations by which villagers themselves would not abide. Reflecting on his action, he explained to me that he had to listen to people in the village and hear what they wanted, because otherwise they would resist what he tried to do.

The Madurese departed—only to go to Pulau Peropa, an island about two kilometers north of Pulau Rantau that was the center of another village in the

²⁷ Liisa H. Malkki, "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees," in *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, ed. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 53–72.

²⁸ Tania M. Li, "Engaging Simplifications: Community-based Resource Management, Market Processes, and State Agendas in Upland Southeast Asia," *World Development* 30,2 (2002): 265–83.

²⁹ Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, "Naturing the Nation: Aliens, Apocalypse, and the Postcolonial State," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27,3 (2001): 627–51.

archipelago. There they paid 200,000 rupiah to the village head, and two days later continued working on the area's reefs. (The subdistrict chief had spread the word about Malakaji's access ordinance, and other villages had followed suit.) Firman found the irony delightful: Pulau Rantau's divers and their patrons had succeeded in pressuring Made Ali to exclude the Madurese divers, only to find out that the Malakaji's waters "could not be divided, they were all one" with the waters of other, nearby villages.

Made Ali was furious. He complained to me, as I am sure he did to others, that the village had now "lost twice"—the visiting divers were still exploiting the reefs, and the village did not even have three million rupiah to show for it! He told the aggrieved divers not to bother him again about this issue, and not to disturb the Madurese visitors anymore because they had arranged access with another village in the archipelago. Without further event, the Madurese went home several weeks later, when the off-season began in late April.

When I returned from Southeast Sulawesi in early November, six Madurese boats had gained permission from Malakaji Village to operate in Kariango's waters, and sold their lobster to Made Ali. Made Ali explained that the Madurese could report to any village in the archipelago, but had chosen to report in Malakaji because of his high level of service as a village head (and no doubt his service as a businessperson). He also noted that the RRB had reduced the duration that future passes would be valid from three to two months.

The preceding narrative has again illustrated how Made Ali occupied multiple positions of authority and responsibility that sometimes set him against himself. When divers from Madura entered the village's waters in mid-February, his constituency tangibly expanded from Malakaji's villagers to Indonesian citizens as a whole. In subsequent months, he tried to guarantee universal access to marine resources—a right guaranteed in the Indonesian Constitution and underscored in decades of fisheries legislation—while guarding against their degradation. And he attempted to secure the best deal for the village and its economy without writing off the partisan concerns of Pulau Rantau's divers, some of whom were his own clients. All the while, he continued to pursue profits from the compromises he at times mediated, at times negotiated. His ability to guide the actions of others, however, had limits. He had to convince the RRB that an access ordinance would address multiple concerns in a legal manner; he abrogated the fledgling regulation following continued complaints by Pulau Rantau's divers and patrons; and, after excluding the Madurese, he could only watch them find alternate ways to access the reefs.

IN SUHARTO'S WAKE

Indonesia's 1999 reformation, especially Laws 22 and 25,³⁰ began making waves in the waters of Malakaji in 2003. In response to pressure from the police, his state superiors, several of his client fishers, and an island's worth of constituents, Made Ali, a popularly elected village head, decided to alter his lucrative yet destructive business practices to comply with the national laws on fisheries development and protection that he had responsibility for upholding. When patrons and divers from Pulau Rantau attempted to exclude divers from Madura, this same village head refuted discursive claims about autochthonous rights that attempted to position the

³⁰ Refer back to footnotes one and two.

Madurese as illegitimate. Instead, Made Ali chose to respond to their concerns by working jointly with the village's new Rural Representative Board to draft and implement an access ordinance that positioned the Madurese as Indonesian citizens with equal rights to the village's reefs. Through these conflicts and provisional compromises, an assortment of actors routed through Malakaji re-articulated locally specific meanings and practices of fisheries exploitation, village economic development, and resource conservation in light of newly democratizing relations of accountability.

At the same time, the 2003 conflicts illustrate that regional autonomy is not a panacea for injustice and prejudice. In the first case (i.e., regarding destructive practices from which he profited), although Made Ali responded to his constituents by reducing his own considerable involvement in cyanide diving, he did not succeed in resolving Malakaji's inter-island troubles, and line fishers remained relatively marginalized. In the second case (i.e., concerning divers who were not local residents), Made Ali was again downwardly accountable, but this meant subordinating the visiting Madurese to the exclusionary demands of vocal patrons and divers; resolution only came insofar as the visitors moved a small distance to a more welcoming village. During a brief return to the field in 2006, I came across three similar cases in other parts of Sulawesi and Kalimantan, where villagers had interpreted regional autonomy and its new coastal jurisdictions to mean that they, too, now controlled their immediate coastal zones and had the right to exclude "outsiders" from accessing the resources therein. The key misinterpretations in Malakaji and another case I investigated in South Sulawesi were that regional autonomy laws had granted villages new coastal management powers, and that autochthons had privileged rights of access. The danger facing migrant Indonesian fishers is that such sedentarist metaphysics, typically manifest on land, are spreading throughout Indonesia's island villages, and the universal maritime inheritance of Indonesia's citizens is being appropriated by strongly territorial subgroups.

The way in which village governments work through historical legacies of power and difference during this period of transition to direct democracy will likely have a strong influence on equality and future norms of governance in those places. In the preceding pages I have tried to show that the course Malakaji is now navigating cannot be explained solely with reference to its charismatic new village head nor by the village head's responsibility to ever-higher levels of government. Rather, growing democratization has made it clear that Malakaji's current trajectory is a product of the historically rooted, often contradictory, and always unstable relationships between Made Ali and the people he is attempting to govern. The rationalization of fisheries exploitation and development remains central, but not in the abstract sense of policies implemented by a reified State. Rationalities of government and their corresponding technologies, like the village ordinance, matter to the extent that they provide a platform for diverse actors to define and link the desires of not just the Indonesian nation and village governments, but the everyday citizens who engage, constitute, and transgress the discursively bounded Indonesian State. Resource exploitation and development are negotiated in the everyday encounters between diverse actors at sea and on land, who attempt to define and link the desires of the Indonesian nation with those of village governments and their own families. For scholars of the Era of Reformation, the individuals who simultaneously engage, constitute, and transgress the discursively constructed boundaries of "the

Indonesian State” provide a powerful vehicle for examining and explaining the ways in which villages across the country are attempting to democratize development.

THEIR MOMENT IN THE SUN: THE NEW INDONESIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM THE OLD OKP

Loren Ryster

INTRODUCTION

"It's Gonna Be Brutal! North Sumatra Parliament Members Challenged to Duel," ran a headline in the October 10, 2006, edition of the Medan daily *Warta Garuda*.¹ One parliamentarian, irate with colleagues who had taken to walking out during routine planning meetings with incumbent North Sumatra Governor Rudolph Pardede, had challenged the offenders to brawl "one by one." Not about to be cowed, another shot back, "Any time, any place!"² The executive director of a public-policy watchdog NGO lamented: "What the hell are these representatives of the people doing fronting like gangsters [*preman*]? The [parliament] is a respected institution and the guardian of the aspirations of the people, not an institution of *preman*."³ Criticism came from within the institution's halls as well. One parliamentary commission secretary glibly remarked that parliamentarians "can be classified into five types of animal: komodo dragons, crocodiles, monitor lizards, iguanas, and ... common house-lizards."⁴ The

¹ "Bakal Seru ... ! Sesama Anggota DPRDSU Ajak Duel" and "5 Tipe Binatang," *Warta Garuda*, October 10, 2006.

² "Saya siap melayani ajakan dual adu fisik ... kapan dan di mana saja," said Star Moon Party (PBB, Partai Bulan Bintang) Fraction Head Romo Raden Muhammad Syafii. "Bakal Seru ..." *Warta Garuda*, October 10, 2006.

³ "Wakil rakyat kok berlagak preman. DPRD Sumut adalah institusi lembaga terhormat dan pengemban aspirasi rakyat, bukan institusi para preman," said Elsaka Executive Director Effendi Panjaitan SE. Ibid.

⁴ The Secretary of North Sumatra DPRD Commission A, Drs. H. Ahmad Ikhyar Hasibuan, remarked, "Anggota DPRD Sumut ada yang bertipe bak komodo, buaya, biawak, bingkarong, dan ada juga berperilaku seperti cicak." "5 Tipe Binatang," *Warta Garuda*. The typology seems straight out of Marsden's early nineteenth-century *History of Sumatra*: "Alligators, *buaya* ... abound in most of the rivers, grow to a large size, and do much mischief ... The guana, or iguana, *biawak* ... is another animal of the lizard kind, about three or four feet in length, harmless, excepting to the poultry and young domestic cattle ... The *bingkarong* is next in size,

suggestion that not only are parliamentarians classifiable as animals, but that they are all lizards of various size and ferocity, was evidently no laughing matter. This comment, too, was taken by other parliamentarians as a sort of challenge requiring a public response, at least in the view of one fraction leader who felt compelled to deny it the next day, stating "if we just ignore it, it means it's true we're like animals."

It is all too easy to scoff in this way at the burly character of Indonesia's new crop of "post-authoritarian" "democratic" politicians and to argue that the Indonesian state remains, as it was during the New Order, a criminal state.⁵ This has long ceased to be a task for scholarship, as the Indonesian press and public discourse quite openly delight in such revelations of this public secret, as the above exchange exemplifies. While it remains necessary to reiterate this argument, if only to deflect those who insist, despite all evidence to the contrary, on framing the developments in the early post-Suharto years in terms roadblocks to or deviations from a path of transition to democracy, the claim as such is insufficient.⁶ At the same time, it is no less important to put to rest lamentations, translated into analysis, that Indonesia's democratic institutions have been "captured" by "predatory interests."⁷ The notion of capture is woefully unsatisfactory, since it implies that the institutions themselves would maintain a state of ideal typical purity if only they were staffed by democrats oriented to the public good, who properly understand their true purpose. Indeed, such formulations about "capture" parallel the rogue (*oknum*) discourse that has for so long and so well served the powerful in Indonesia—the idea that an institution is beyond repute, and only irresponsible, rogue individuals corrupt it—an idea that ultimately and repeatedly allows institutions of the state to justify their own existence in terms of their service to the public interest, while those associated with the institutions continue to pursue their long-standing primary goal: private aggrandizement. Vedi Hadiz, as part of his excellent critique of the application of the transition-to-democracy literature to Indonesia, puts forward precisely such a notion of capture as an alternative, but the evidence he presents is more nuanced. He

has hard, dark scales on the back, and is often found under heaps of decayed timber; its bite venomous." William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra, Containing an Account of the Government, Laws, Customs, and Manners of the Native Inhabitants, with a Description of the Natural Productions, and a Relation of the Ancient Political State of That Island*, 3rd ed. (London: Paternoster-Row, p. 1811).

⁵ I have done as much in previous work, and others have since taken up the argument. See Loren Rytter, "Pemuda Pancasila: The Last Loyalist Free Men of Suharto's Order?," in *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia*, ed. Benedict Anderson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2001); Tim Lindsey, "The Criminal State: Premanisme and the New Indonesia," in *Indonesia Today: Challenges of History*, ed. Grayson J. Lloyd and Shannon L. Smith (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies [ISEAS], 2001).

⁶ Vedi Hadiz has deftly critiqued the transition-to-democracy literature as it has been applied to Indonesia. Vedi Hadiz, "Reorganizing Political Power in Indonesia: A Reconsideration of So-Called 'Democratic Transitions,'" *The Pacific Review* 16,4 (2003); and Hadiz, "Power and Politics in North Sumatra: The Uncompleted Reformasi," in *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation*, ed. Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003). See also R. William Liddle, *Crafting Indonesian Democracy* (Jakarta: Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan Politik dan Kewilayahan Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia [PPW-LIPI], with Ford Foundation, with Mizan, 2001); Damien Kingsbury and Arief Budiman, *Indonesia: The Uncertain Transition* (Adelaide: Crawford House Publishing, 2001); and Jürgen Rüland et al., *Parliaments and Political Change in Asia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2005).

⁷ Hadiz, "Power and Politics in North Sumatra," p. 119.

recognizes that the “old forces have been able to reinvent themselves” while admitting to profound “competing interests within civil society,” and argues that “the situation is not simply that of powerful ‘bad guys’ versus weak ‘good guys.’”⁸ In other words, it is not simply a matter of civil society’s public goods-oriented democrats being blocked at every turn by predatory old forces.

To argue, as I do here, that the flourishing multiparty system has been staffed out of a vast pool of what I have elsewhere called “natural human resources,”⁹ people educated in the New Order and fluent in its vocabulary who have most thoroughly internalized its logics, is not equivalent to saying that the state has been “captured” by “old forces.” Rather, it is to suggest that key structural and ideological elements of an arrangement consolidated over decades necessarily accustomed its subjects to certain modes of politics, certain assumptions about what politics are and should be, and certain modes of speaking and behaving politically. In my previous work on quasi-gangster state-affiliated youth groups, I argued that Indonesian politics during the New Order were like turf wars.¹⁰ The competition among these youth groups on the streets for turf mirrored a fraught contestation for position in broader politics. Just as the periodic exercise of violence in support of the regime was compensated with *carte blanche* to control a wide range of illegal and quasi-legal enterprises (including prostitution, gambling, drug distribution, land clearing, protection rackets, and the collection of informal taxes and parking fees), so, too, was the political support of politicians and officers at all levels generally rewarded with similar license, provided adequate initiative to grab and hold it. Indeed, I argued that the colloquial Indonesian term for gangster cited above in the Medan press—*preman*—gained its unique valence by virtue of the fact that it retained an earlier meaning, which referred to a soldier or policeman in street attire or an official acting in a private capacity, thus always suggesting both violent criminality and also indexing the inherent privateer quality of officialdom.¹¹

I would suggest here that today’s parliamentary seats both constitute a new kind of turf in their own right and permit greater, faster, and more widely divisible opportunities for the seizure and redistribution of some old kinds of “turf” in the form of concessions, rents, contracts, territory, and the like. At the same time, I am arguing that to understand this change as merely a change of costume—the act of an established politico-gangster clan donning the new hats of parliamentarians—is to fail to appreciate the dynamic, *democratic* force of what Carl Trocki and others have called gangster democracy.¹² Indeed, given the intolerance of the regime towards

⁸ Hadiz, “Reorganizing Political Power in Indonesia,” p. 594.

⁹ *Sumber daya manusia*, a term close to “manpower,” which locates the potential for productive contribution to some common project as a subject’s primary function.

¹⁰ Ryter, “Pemuda Pancasila.” See also Loren Ryter, “Youth, Gangs, and the State in Indonesia” (PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 2002).

¹¹ The term *preman* comes from the Dutch *vrijman*, or free man, which as early as the seventeenth century referred to a free trader who was not an employee of the Dutch East India Company but was licensed by it to engage in trade. For most of the twentieth century, the term *preman* referred to an officer in his civvies, and only by the 1990s did its current meaning of “gangster” enter the national vocabulary. Ryter, “Pemuda Pancasila.”

¹² Outstanding work has been done on gangsters and new democratic institutions in Southeast Asia, particularly in Thailand and the Philippines. See Carl A. Trocki, ed., *Gangsters, Democracy, and the State in Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1998); Benedict Anderson, “Murder and Progress in Modern Siam,” in *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (London: Verso Press, 1998); John T.

fundamental oppositional challengers, the vibrant turf wars among the New Order's own supporters are what most viably allowed for popular mobility, for such skirmishes at least provided opportunities for a capable and clever man of the streets to claw his way upwards, with only the presidency itself understood to be off-limits to all aspirants.¹³ What a more assertive parliament has most accomplished, then, is to open up vastly more points of access to considerably more valuable seizures, and not just to old personalities but also to their underlings long waiting in the wings, who nevertheless understand the rules of the game. By understanding these sorts of figures, at once extensions of the state and its most practiced democrats, we can better appreciate why old statist frameworks—such as bureaucratic authoritarianism—wrongly assumed a fixed hierarchy and a closed and stagnant systematicity. It also becomes clear why more *à la mode* approaches to civil society so obviate subjectivity that they fail to recognize the actors of civil society for all that they embody. In short, if there is a populism in Indonesia, this is it.

If they are not strictly bad guys or good guys, not precisely old forces and yet not precisely popular representatives of some civic public, then who are these *guys* who are Indonesia's new crop of parliamentarians, who have not so much captured parliament as amplified it, who have deftly transformed a mere formality into something formidable? If we are to understand this newly assertive parliament and vibrant multiparty politics, as they deserve to be understood, as significant departures from the apparently rubber-stamp parliament and corporatist quasi-party arrangement of the *status quo ante*, without at the same time permitting ourselves to make facile proclamations about significant (albeit limited) democratic transitions, then we must make their acquaintance. Who are these people, how do they relate to their constituents and to the executive they structurally have the power to check, how do they themselves articulate their positions and purpose, and how and where do they actually spend their days?

THE OKP AS PARTY TRAINING WHEELS

This chapter aims to introduce an influential segment of the figures who have come to preponderate the party system, the national parliament (DPR-RI), the provincial parliaments (DPRD-I), and the municipal parliaments or city councils

Sidel, *Capital, Coercion, and Crime: Bossism in the Philippines* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); John T. Sidel, "Bossism and Democracy in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia: Towards an Alternative Framework for the Study of 'Local Strongmen,'" in *Politicising Democracy: The New Local Politics and Democratisation*, ed. John Harriss, Kristian Stokke, and Olle Törnquist (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); and James Ockey, *Making Democracy: Leadership, Class, Gender, and Political Participation in Thailand* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004). At times, however, some of this work treats gangster democracy as a sort of pathological deviation from an ideal-typical real democracy, and here it is, in my view, most limited. See Ockey, *Making Democracy*.

¹³ Former Medan FKPPi (Forum Komunikasi Putra Putri Purnawirawan ABRI, Communication Forum for the Sons and Daughters of Pensioners of the Indonesian Armed Forces) Chief Martius Latuperissa expressed some nostalgia for this free-for-all for all but one: "In the Suharto era, as long as we didn't challenge Suharto, we could do anything we wanted including challenge the governor [*kepala daerah*]. Yeah, that's it. Before the only one who couldn't be challenged was Suharto. Anyone else, go ahead!" October 18, 2006.

(DPRD-II).¹⁴ Of specific concern here are current parliamentarians who first whetted their political teeth in the major New Order youth groups, specifically in the "Youth Social Organizations" (OKP, Organisasi Kemasyarakatan Pemuda), largely during the 1980s and 1990s. It focuses on leaders of these erstwhile paramilitary OKP,¹⁵ which during the New Order most aggressively defended the regime, notoriously intimidated regime opponents, showed up *en masse* for Golkar rallies, and turned out the vote for Golkar. These include Pemuda Pancasila (PP, Pancasila Youth), FKPP (The Communication Forum for the Sons and Daughters of Pensioners of the Indonesian Armed Forces), PPM (Pemuda Panca Marga, the Veterans' Youth), and AMPI (Indonesian Renewal Young Generation). It also includes leaders of KNPI, the Indonesian National Youth Council, the umbrella group of all New Order youth groups, which was established in the early 1970s with the backing of intelligence chief Ali Moertopo. While a great many of these figures have remained with Golkar, many others have tried their luck with other political parties, notably PDI-P, and, in North Sumatra, PAN. While many of the current crop of parliamentarians with OKP backgrounds were recognized leaders of these groups before 1998, others were at the time mere members or low-level branch leaders with ambitions to rise through the ranks. In many areas, these groups have largely graduated from street-level turf wars, with some reluctance surrendering that business to new religiously and ethnic-based paramilitary groups,¹⁶ though there is, of course, both some membership cross-over and retention or attempted retention of stakes in gambling, prostitution, parking fee collection, and the like.

KNPI, the corporatist forum that served as an umbrella for all New Order youth groups, among which the OKP were dominant, served more than anything else as a model parliament, a perfect training ground for the party politics of the future present. It's true that the OKP mentioned above, themselves analogous to parties, and grouped within KNPI, had little of substance to disagree about other than a scramble over resources, turf, and position. But then this would also be mostly true later on within the party system. There was a tendency for officers or bureaucrats to "drop" candidates for leadership positions within KNPI and within each OKP internally. But this practice was not well liked by members themselves, who all, as it were, wanted a chance to get ahead on their own merits. Therefore, constant debate took place within KNPI and within most OKP about the implementation of a one-man, one-vote system, which was in general ultimately eagerly embraced, albeit with laments about how doing away with responsible "formatting teams" was bound to

¹⁴ The Indonesian acronyms for each of these institutions, youth groups, parties, and so forth will be used exclusively after first being introduced. In cases where they are generally known to Indonesianists, they may be used without explanation in the text. Please refer to the glossary for expansions, translations, and comments.

¹⁵ Paramilitary groups have morphed since 1998, to be sure. But these particular OKP by the late 1990s had all adopted color-coded camouflage uniforms and boasted of connections to senior military officers, while generally still loudly proclaiming their independence. The exception is KNPI, which is not, properly speaking, an OKP, but is an umbrella organization that includes the OKP; the uniform of KNPI was never camouflage but rather solid blue.

¹⁶ For comprehensive discussion of major post-1998 paramilitary groups, see Jacqui Baker, "Laskar Jihad's Mimetic Stutter: State Power, Spectacular Violence, and the Fetish in the Indonesian Postcolony" (Bachelor of Asian Studies [Honours] thesis, The Australian National University, 2002); Lindsey, "The Criminal State"; and Ian Douglas Wilson, "Continuity and Change: The Changing Contours of Organized Violence in Post-New Order Indonesia," *Critical Asian Studies* 38,2 (2006).

diminish leadership “quality.”¹⁷ This lament would later be echoed in terms of the caliber of the victors of direct elections. Nurlif, a DPR-RI parliamentarian, put the analogy succinctly:

Before, the KNPI was the forum [where] OKP [would] associate. It was as if anyone who could get into KNPI got high marks in youth circles ... [The competition to become a KNPI officer used to be very tight ...] Not any longer. The competition among OKP to snatch a position in KNPI isn’t like before ... The competition among OKPs now is over placing their cadres not in KNPI, but via the political parties to become members of the DPR or DPRD. So before the KNPI was the fought-over prize. [But these days they can go to] the parties and stand out as party leaders even though they’re youngsters.¹⁸

Here, the vernacular reinforces the analogy. Parliamentarians and OKP members are both called *anggota*, a term also used for members of the armed forces.

The political experience gained by those active in the OKP was not limited merely to acumen in climbing the ladder. The sanctioned nature of these groups also allowed some limited space to adopt and advocate controversial positions, and thereby gain experience in something akin to policy debate. The KNPI and the major OKP were about the only organizations in the name of which aspiring politicians could take public stands on highly taboo issues that would land your average “non-affiliated” activist in jail or worse. In fact, one of the earliest calls for Suharto to resign, though worded in the weakest of terms, was issued in 1990 by AMPI chief Widjanarko Puspoyo, who stated at the time: “Hopefully, some thought can be given to limiting the term of office of the president during the 1993 MPR General Session.”¹⁹ Looking back, he explained, while exaggerating the radicalism of what he actually proposed:

I criticized Pak Harto, I asked him not to [proclaim his candidacy for president] again in 1992. AMPI immediately split. Those who supported me were generally brilliant ... but those in the pure *ormas* [social organization] from the *kino* [pillar groups of Golkar] disagreed with me ... “If necessary, Harto should be president for life, and we’ll stay under him to amass our own political power ... ” I told Pak Harto, “I don’t have my own champion, I haven’t picked someone to replace you, and I don’t hate you ... ”²⁰

¹⁷ The use of formatting teams, an autocratic tool for leadership selection, is an inheritance from Dutch colonial rule; such teams are still used in some instances in Holland today.

¹⁸ Personal interview with Nurlif, Jakarta, September 26, 2006. “Dulu KNPI itu kan merupakan wadah berhimpun OKP. Jadi seolah-olah siapa yang bisa masuk ke KNPI, itu punya nilai tertentu di kalangan pemuda. [Persaingan untuk menjadi pengurus KNPI itu dulu sangat ketat.] Sekarang tidak. Persaingan sesama OKP untuk memperebutkan posisi KNPI tidak seperti dulu ... Persaingan OKP sekarang untuk menempatkan kadernya bukan di KNPI tapi lewat partai politik untuk menjadi anggota DPR, DPRD ... Dulu kan KNPI dulu menjadi perebutan ... Tapi hari ini ... Dia bisa di partai politik menonjol sebagai pengurus partai meskipun dia anak muda.”

¹⁹ *Jawa Pos*, December 28, 1990, cited by *apakabar*, online, in “AMPI: Limit Presidential Term,” English abridged translation, January 10, 1991. Available at www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1991/01/10/0009.html, viewed May 11, 2009.

²⁰ Personal interview with Widjanarko Puspoyo, Jakarta, October 1, 2006. “Pak Harto kan saya kritik, Pak Harto saya minta untuk tidak mencanangkan diri lagi tahun 92 ... AMPI langsung

Indeed, the main issue was not any particular disagreement with Suharto or his policies, but rather the desire to make room for the up-and-comers. Those “brilliant” OKP leaders were themselves itching for a chance eventually to reach the top office.²¹ Widjanarko added:

The growth of new parties is in part due to that [desire for a chance]. In the end, they [junior OKP leaders] became legislative members in other parties. Even though their quality, had they stayed in Golkar, was still at a junior level. That’s what’s going on now, all these members who are very junior are legislative members without any knowledge at all about national politics.²²

PPM and PDI-P leader Tjahyo Kumolo estimates that more than two hundred current DPR-RI parliamentarians are from the OKP that made up the KNPI. The first two speakers after 1998, Akbar Tanjung and Agung Laksono, were both national KNPI or OKP heads, and both have served as the Minister of Youth and Sports as well.²³ During Akbar Tanjung’s tenure as speaker (1999–2004), he even organized a formal “caucus” of ex-KNPI parliamentarians in the DPR-RI.

Pemuda Pancasila alone could boast in 2004 that hundreds of its former members had become parliamentarians at all levels. In part, this was a result of PP’s violently contested internal decision at its 1999 extraordinary congress to declare itself “independent” and allow its members to disseminate broadly across the political parties. Most chose to remain in Golkar, but large numbers went into PDI-P, PAN in North Sumatra, and other parties as well. PP’s central leadership is now spread across the board. PP’s big boss, Yapto Soerjosoemarno, founded his own political party (the Patriot Party) and its number-two man, Yorrys Raweyai, became head of Golkar’s own new youth wing, AMPG (Golkar Party Young Generation). Ruhut Situmpul, PP “lawyer of the damned,” is now a leader of SBY’s (President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s) Democratic Party. Said Ruhut: “In a few provinces, they followed me to Democratic because they know I’m in Democratic. Or they followed to Golkar because they know Yorrys is in Golkar.”²⁴

pecah, sebagian mendukung saya, yang mendukung saya itu kebanyakan orang-orang brilian yang pintar ... Tapi orang-orang di ormas murni yang dari kino-kino ... tidak setuju dengan saya, ‘Kalau perlu pak Harto sampai matipun menjadi presiden terus, sehingga kita ini tetap bisa berada dibawah dia untuk mengembangkan kekuatan politik kita ...’ Dan saya katakana pada Pak Harto, ‘Saya tidak punya jago, saya tidak punya pilihan siapa yang gantikan Pak Harto, dan saya juga tidak benci Pak Harto.’”

²¹ John T. Sidel, “Macet Total: Logics of Circulation and Accumulation in the Demise of Indonesia’s New Order,” *Indonesia* 66 (October 1998): 159–94.

²² Personal interview with Widjanarko Puspoyo. “Tumbuhnya partai-partai baru antara lain karena [mereka ingin kesempatan untuk naik ke jabatan president] ... Akhirnya dia menjadi anggota legislatif dari partai baru. Padahal quality-nya kalau di Golkar ini masih taraf junior gitu. Itulah yang terjadi, sekarang anggota-anggota ini sangat junior sudah jadi anggota dewan tanpa knowledge sama sekali tentang politik nasional ...”

²³ Akbar Tanjung was KNPI chief (1978–81) and Minister of Youth and Sports (1988–93). Agung Laksono was AMPI chief (1984–89) and Minister of Youth and Sports (1998–99).

²⁴ Personal interview with Ruhut Situmpul, Jakarta, September 15, 2006. “Ada juga di beberapa propinsi ikut ke Demokrat karena tahu saya di Demokrat. Atau ikut ke Golkar karena tahu Yorrys di Golkar.”



Yorrys Raweyai (TEMPO/ Bodhi Chandra, reprinted with permission)

PP could claim twelve members in the 2004 DPR-RI parliament, approximately 115 in provincial parliaments (DPRD-I), and more than four hundred in DPRD-II throughout Indonesia.²⁵ Would-be candidates and party members have tended to follow the lead of PP elders and seniors. PAN drew many PP members in North Sumatra because it was the party of choice for PP co-founder Amran YS who, after later being disavowed by Amien Rais, has since begun a courtship with SBY's Democratic Party. The presence of PP in the North Sumatra and Medan parliaments is especially pronounced, due to the dominance of PP there and the fact that its main local OKP rival, IPK, for the most part decided to concentrate on its gambling ventures and other illegal enterprises and eschew party politics.²⁶ The tone of a

²⁵ Personal interview with Nurlif. Though he admits Pemuda Pancasila is still trying to "inventory" them all. (Laments about incomplete data concerning its membership have actually been a constant refrain for decades from PP.)

²⁶ This may have been a fatal decision for IPK leader Olo Panggabean, as Sutanto, SBY's national police chief, decided to crack down heavily on gambling. Sutanto singled out Olo, who had flouted his authority in the past when he was North Sumatra police chief. As of late 2006, Olo was rumored to have fled North Sumatra for Singapore. He kept his illegal ventures on the down low, opening up restaurants and dabbling in fisheries instead. See Nurlis E. Meuko, Rumbadi Dalle, and Hambali Batubara, "Going Legit," *TEMPO*, August 29–September 4, 2006. During Ramadan, Olo's normally rambunctious discos were shut tight. Olo was also said to be courting SBY directly, offering support for PD. Even his immediate underlings proved impossible to contact. The former IPK Medan chief, with whom I am acquainted and whom I met in 2006, had been forced out and had received death threats. After I had made extraordinary efforts to arrange a meeting with Olo, one of his few party functionaries (with Golkar) granted me just a two-minute audience. Olo Panggabean (b. 1941) died April 30, 2009, at a Medan hospital just days after being flown home from Singapore, where he had previously been hospitalized. *Antara News*, "Olo Panggabean Akan Dimakamkan Sabtu,"

leading PP figure now active in PDI-P—Boyke Turangan—illustrates both the tightness of the network across the parties and also something of the Mafioso character of the relations among PP members and its leaders, regardless of party:

From the DPC everywhere, Brother ... Lots of [PP] *ketua* [bosses] are Golkar members, some are *ketua* of PAN. The Pemuda Pancasila cadre here, my cadre, is the *ketua* of PAN. The *ketua* of the Patriot Party, they're in Demokrat. Demokrat is what's his name, uh, who? Ansor! Demokrat! In Medan. Lots of 'em. More or less just about all of 'em in the DPR are former PP members. For me the word's respect. "*Ketua!*"²⁷

FACTS OF FIGURES

It is not without some reservation that quantitative data are provided here in a volume that argues for the necessity of ethnographic approaches to the study of the state. Data are unreliable when power holders conceal or lie about embarrassing facts. Of the 684 parliamentarians whose vitas are published in the volume, *Wajah DPR dan DPD 2004–2009*, upon which this data set is based, many omitted elements of their backgrounds that would have made this analysis even more striking.²⁸ Known leading figures or even founders of groups with which this chapter is concerned left out mention of their past affiliations with those groups. Agung Laksono, a national leader of AMPI and erstwhile Minister of Youth and Sports, mentions neither of these positions on his vita. The data were appropriately adjusted when the facts were known, but a significant amount of underreporting must be taken into account. Furthermore, the volume itself, at times, probably has the data wrong, such as when it reports that a candidate received more than 100 percent of the vote in his district. And yet, since the data are still revealing despite their limitations, it would be remiss to exclude it.

My coding of parliamentarians' backgrounds follows these guidelines: "Any Youth Group" means some background in any formal youth group (*pemuda* or *pelajar*), but *not* exclusively university student (*mahasiswa*) groups such as HMI. The label "Green Youth Group" is more limited here, indicating only that the parliamentarian had a background in the Nadlathul Ulama's Ansor, PPP's Gerakan Pemuda Kabah (GPK), or a mosque youth group (*remaja mesjid*). "OKP" indicates any membership in either PP, PPM, AMPI, FKPP, or AMPG, but *not* in KNPI.²⁹ "Business" in this case identifies those who listed executive positions in *two* or more

April 30, 2009, www.antara.co.id/arc/2009/4/30/olo-panggabea-akan-dimakamkan-sabtu/ viewed on April 30, 2009.

²⁷ Personal interview with Boyke Turangan, Medan, October 13, 2006. "Di DPC-DPC di mana-mana, Bung. Banyak ketuanya yang udah anggotanya Golkar, ada yang ketua PAN. Kader Pemuda Pancasila sini, kader aku, ketua PAN. Ketua Partai Patriot, ada yang di Demokrat. Demokrat Si Anu, Si ... Siapa? Ansor! Demokrat! Di Medan. Jadi banyak. Rata-rata yang di DPR itu hampir rata bekas anggota PP. Sama kita gini lah, semua hormat. 'Ketua!'" DPC (Dewan Pimpinan Cabang, Branch Leadership Council) is PP's municipal-level headquarters. Ansor is Nadhlathul Ulama's youth wing.

²⁸ *Wajah DPR dan DPD 2004–2009* [Faces of the DPR and DPD 2004–2009] (Jakarta: Kompas, 2005).

²⁹ While, strictly speaking, OKP refers to any official youth group that is part of the KNPI, here I employ the more conventional usage, which refers only to the pro-Golkar youth groups.

corporations or leadership positions in the real-estate developers' association, REI, or the contractors' association, Gapensi. "Tough" here signifies membership in any of the OKP or leadership positions in the amateur radio association Orasi or in major national "masculine" sports associations (boxing, martial arts, football, and so forth). "Official" means that the parliamentarian had a background in the bureaucracy or the military. These are overlapping categories. With access to a considerable labor pool among its members for construction jobs and land clearing, combined with the limitless availability of development funds, many OKP leaders made out like bandits in contracting and real estate.³⁰ Amateur radio is a hobby popular among the early New Order youth-group leaders, themselves frequently army brats, that connected them to the modern world of strategic communications and informally linked them with their fathers.

Almost half of all members of parliament (45 percent) listed some youth-group affiliation on their *vitas*. Parliamentarians' backgrounds are further broken down in the following chart by party according to the categories described above. Chart 1 illustrates the percentage of representatives in each party with those given backgrounds. (Parties with one or no seats were excluded, but parties with only a few seats, such as PPDK and PKPB [see Table 1], were included, which tends to overemphasize their significance in Chart 1.) Since all of the OKP supported Golkar during the New Order, it is not terribly surprising that 41 percent of Golkar representatives boast of their OKP backgrounds. More surprising is that 10 percent of the DPR-RI members overall list OKP backgrounds. It turns out that the DPD (Regional Representatives' Assembly) is a good back-door avenue to power for ex-OKP figures: 7 percent of all the DPD members listed OKP backgrounds.³¹ It is also interesting that some representatives of the major parties PDI-P, PD, and PKB—as well as of the smaller PBR, PPDK, and PKPB—had no issue with emphasizing their membership or leadership roles in the pro-Golkar OKP on their *vitas*. Again, more probably chose to omit those backgrounds.

³⁰ Developer and Bimantara executive Alexander Edwin Kawilarang, son of General Alex Evert Kawilarang, became the secretary general (1992–95) and then president (*ketua umum*, 1995–98) of REI while holding the post of chief treasurer of AMPI (1994–97), and then became a *ketua* of FKPPi (1998–2003). "Ir. Alexander Edwin Kawilarang: Pengusaha Properti Sekaligus Politisi [Engineer Alexander Edwin Kawilarang: Property Developer and Politician "Alexander Edwin Kawilarang (FKPPi) Pengusaha Dan Politisi," *Tokoh Indonesia*, <http://www.tokohindonesia.com/ensiklopedi/a/alexander-edwin-kawilarang>, last accessed March 6, 2009.

³¹ The DPD is a new national-level institution introduced as a result of amendments to the 1945 constitution passed since 1999. Formally, the DPD is subordinate to the DPR, and members of the former can be dismissed at any time by the latter. However, I suspect their informal influence is greater than this would suggest. Members of the DPD were directly elected beginning in 2004, confusing many voters who wrongly assumed that the DPD was a party. Many of these candidates must have ridden in on personal reputation and name recognition. T. A. Legowo, M. Djadjiono, and Sebastian Salang, *Lembaga Perwakilan Rakyat Di Indonesia: Studi Dan Analisis Sebelum Dan Setelah Perubahan Uud 1945* (Jakarta: Formappi and AusAID, 2005).

Chart 1: Background by Party in the DPR-RI 2004-2009

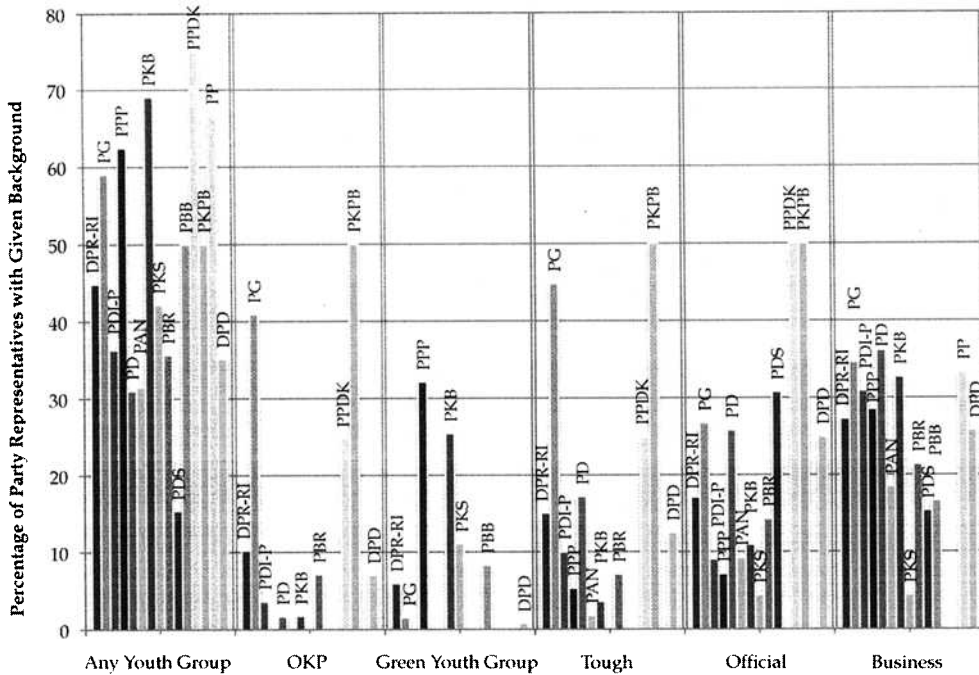


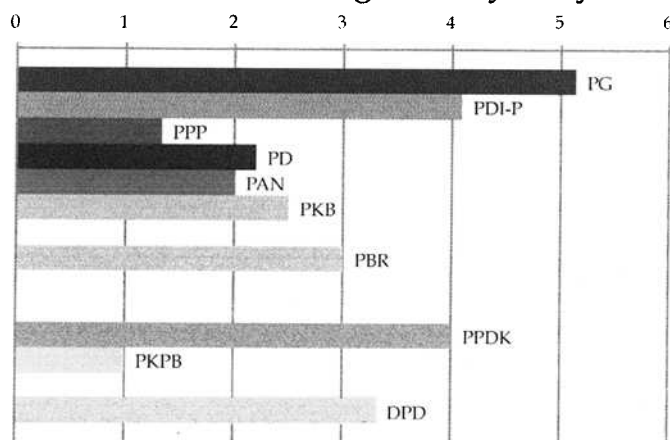
**TABLE 1:
Party Seats**

Party Abbreviation	Party Name	English Translation	Seats
PG	Partai Golkar	Golkar Party	127
PDIP	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan	Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle	110
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan	Unity Development Party	56
PD	Partai Demokrat	Democratic Party	58
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional	National Mandate Party	54
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa	National Awakening Party	55
PKS	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera	Welfare Justice Party	45
PBR	Partai Bintang Reformasi	Reform Star Party	14
PDS	Partai Damai Sejahtera	Welfare Peace Party	13
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang	Star Moon Party	12
PPDK	Partai Persatuan Demokrasi Kebangsaan	National Democracy Unity Party	4
PKPB	Partai Karya Peduli Bangsa	Concern for the Nation Work Service Party	2
PP	Partai Pelopor	Pioneer Party	3
Other	<one seat each>		3
DPD	Dewan Perwakilan Daerah	Regional Representatives' Assembly	128
DPR-RI	DPR-RI Overall	National People's Representative Assembly	684

Some parliamentarians are more “involved” than others, occupying positions in more than one group at higher levels in the group hierarchies. Involvement in each group was coded in the data set according to leadership positions at (1) subdistrict (*kecamatan*), (2) district (*kabupaten*), (3) provincial, and (4) national levels. Chart 2 shows the differential mean “toughness” according to party among those

representatives of that party who had *some* “tough” background. That is to say, the degree of involvement of those who had *some* OKP, amateur radio, or sporting association backgrounds were averaged according to party, excluding those who had no such association. A maximum score of 28 would have meant that a parliamentarian had held national-level leadership positions in each of five OKP, plus Orasi and a major national sports association. Yorrys Raweyai (who held a DPD seat) received the highest score of 16. Golkar and PDI-P both show a mean “toughness” of over 4, which means its involved representatives each tended to hold a national-level position in one of these seven groups, as well as another position at a lower level in another one.

Chart 2: Mean Toughness by Party



Parliamentarians with OKP backgrounds managed to gain a statistically significant higher percentage of the votes within their electoral districts (see Table 2). Meanwhile, those with “green youth group” backgrounds won a *lower* percentage of votes in their district. Being a “tough” (which overlaps with OKP) resulted in a greater vote share, while being an official did not, and being in business resulted in a lower vote share.

TABLE 2:
Mean % of Votes in District According to Background
in the DPR-RI 2004-2009

Background	Without Such Background	With Such Background	N (# With)	P-Value (Pooled)	Significant
Any Youth Group	15.8	18.5	307	0.0055	No
OKP	16.3	23.5	70	0.0001	Yes
KNPI	16.8	19.2	78	0.1113	No
PP	17.0	17.3	10	0.9556	No
PPM	16.9	24.1	13	0.0411	Yes
AMPI	16.5	25.5	40	0.0001	Yes
FKPPI	17.0	20.0	14	0.4217	No
Green Youth Groups	17.1	15.7	41	0.4740	No
Tough	16.3	21.3	103	0.0002	Yes
Business	17.2	16.6	187	0.5639	No
Official	17.0	17.3	117	0.7799	No

Parliamentarians with youth-group backgrounds were more likely to have occupied their first seats before the resignation of Suharto. On average, only 25 percent of the parliamentarians had previously held a seat at any level before 1998. Of the 70 who had some “red and white” OKP experience,³² 46 percent had held a seat at some level before 1998. Similarly, of the 78 who listed a post with KNPI on their vitas, 41 percent had also occupied a pre-1998 seat. Of the 41 parliamentarians with backgrounds in the “green” youth groups,³³ 51 percent held a seat before 1998. The proportions of those who held seats during the New Order is significant, but this should not obscure the fact that newcomers nevertheless constituted the majority.

INTRODUCING AND LOCATING PARLIAMENTARIANS

This chapter draws from more than twenty interviews³⁴ conducted in September and October 2006, by which time two general election cycles had passed since the end of Suharto’s New Order. The interviewees were then-current or recent post-New Order parliamentarians who held (or had held) offices at the national, provincial (Jakarta Special District, North Sumatra), and municipal levels (Medan), as well as senior bureaucrats and other leading local politicians and party leaders. Nearly all of them had been or still were local or national leaders of one of the major pro-New Order OKP. A few of these subjects are confessed criminals and/or murderers, some of whom boasted in colorful ways at times—normally off-the-record—about their exploits: about the buried bones of members of rival OKP, about sizes of bribes offered and received, about their take from protection rackets, and so forth. But as the specifics of such violence and crimes are not our direct concern here, there is no need to incriminate particular individuals.

Before we turn to what these politicians had to say about their formal positions and how they envision legislative politics in post-authoritarian Indonesia, we need to introduce them and situate them within the spaces where government actually happens. About half of these interviews were conducted in the offices of these figures, or sometimes at their homes, but just as frequently they were conducted, usually at a subject’s request and nearly always on his dime, in the lounge of a luxury hotel or another international standard establishment, where the subject of the interview normally held audiences. Though such establishments were a more common milieu for Jakarta politicians, hotels were also favored by North Sumatra parliamentarians, though the Medan hotel lobbies tended to be somewhat more run-down, more smoke-filled, less impeccably air-conditioned, and furnished with considerably less fine leather. In Medan, as Deasy Simanjuntak describes in this volume, ramshackle coffee shops and parking lots were also common places to encounter politicians. Like the finer establishments, such places might be said to serve as comfort zones or bases where the politician is unrivaled king of his turf, unlike the serial offices of the halls of parliament buildings, where each seat-holder is

³² “Red and White” OKP, i.e., nominally “nationalist,” Golkar-affiliated OKP, which here include Pemuda Pancasila, Pemuda Panca Marga, AMPI, FKPPi, and AMPG.

³³ “Green” youth groups here include Ansor (Nadlathul Ulama), GPK (Gerakan Pemuda Kabah, affiliated with the PPP), and Remaja Mesjid (Mosque Youth).

³⁴ My profound thanks go out to Wahyuni and Ratu Rina for their fast and diligent work on the interview transcriptions.

merely that. At the same time, with cell phone in hand and a chauffeur-driven sedan or SUV at wait, each of these politicians was obviously a man on the move, ready to dash off to important meet-and-greets all over town. In most cases, furthermore, these politicians were more comfortable talking about their backgrounds, passions, alliances, rivalries, and so forth than articulating coherently their attitudes about legislative politics and party agendas.

Ruhut Situmpul is a senior national leader in Pemuda Pancasila and FKPP, a professional lawyer, and a movie and soap opera actor. He stands out with a trademark ponytail and always wears T-shirts. We spoke over iced cappuccinos at the Starbucks at Plaza Senayan, straining at times to hear each other over the blare of reggae music from the speakers directly over our table.³⁵ Ruhut came out as an early *reformasi* figure, standing on a soap box, encouraging students at the parliament building in May 1998, and applauding their call for total *reformasi*. Subsequently and lucratively, he defended senior generals, such as Wiranto, against charges of human rights violations in accountability trials. At the time we spoke, he had become the head of SBY's Democratic Party's Department for the Prevention and Eradication of Corruption and Economic Crimes. He was also involved in setting up the Democratic Party's youth wing, the Indonesian Democrat Young Generation (AMDI), which he admitted was "not as popular as AMPG."³⁶

Nurlif is the Secretary General of Pemuda Pancasila's National Leadership Council, a post he planned to vacate by the end of 2006. Serious and somber, he is articulate yet soft spoken, and one of PP's leading political strategists. He has been a member of the DPR-RI since the last Suharto term. As one of the few parliamentarians with OKP backgrounds who met me in his DPR office, Nurlif came across as unusually devoted to his committee work in the DPR, almost as if he had fully set up camp in the halls of the DPR. Still, even in a short visit it became clear that the fallout from outside operations followed him even there. Nurlif is known for his political involvement in Aceh. At the end of the interview, two female Acehnese self-professed activists, whom he did not know, were waiting outside his door to hit him up for plane tickets home, claiming they were "supporters in danger." Somewhat embarrassed by this encounter in my presence, he brushed them off, admonishing them not to mistake him for "the government."

Widjanarko Puspuyo, the national AMPI leader (1990–95) cited above, who had the tenacity to suggest a limit to Suharto's term of office, was, at the time we met in 2006, the director of the National Logistics Board (Bulog). In 2007 he was arrested on corruption charges and removed from office. In 2008, he was convicted of two counts of corruption and sentenced to ten years in prison.³⁷ He had been a national PDI-P party leader since 1998, though as a government official he was not allowed to advertise his party affiliation. He confessed that he joined PDI-P as a rebuke to Harmoko, who held too fast to Suharto for his liking. I waited in the plush ancillary lobby of the Bulog building for nearly two hours past our scheduled appointment time as he made his way back from the Soekarno-Hatta airport after dealing with

³⁵ Personal interview with Ruhut Situmpul, Jakarta.

³⁶ Golkar's AMPG is led by his PP colleague Yorrys Raweyai.

³⁷ Widjanarko was convicted for manipulating rice prices in an import-export deal, which the court claimed cost the government Rp 78.3 billion, and for accepting bribes from the rice broker. "Widjanarko Gets 10 Years in Prison for Corruption," *The Jakarta Post*, February 5, 2008.

matters of state outside of Jakarta. We sat alone at an enormous conference table after he dismissed his adjutants. Widjanarko had been a KAPI (Indonesian Pupils' Action Unit) member from 1968, just after the tail end of the "annihilation of the PKI"—which is to say that he was too young to have had direct knowledge of, let alone involvement in, the events of 1965. Now, he is among those actively advocating the ban on history texts that place the blame on anyone but the PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party) for "G30/S."

Tjahyo Kumolo is another senior PDI-P parliamentarian, an erstwhile AMPI leader who became the KNPI national chief in 1990 after serving three years as KNPI secretary general. He has also served as a national leader of PPM and on the advisory board of FKPPi since 1988. Recently featured as a playboy on the cover of the gentleman's magazine *Matra*, he is swank and known for his fondness for fine cigars. Journalists adore him for his candor. We met in the piano lounge of a top Jakarta hotel, and snacked on *sate* and sipped cappuccinos at international prices while he took questions for a TV news segment with RCTI.³⁸ Our interview drew to a close after the piano singer began to croon.

Djoko Purwongemboro, a tennis champion, is currently a leading DPR-RI parliamentarian for Golkar. Involved in PPM since 1984, he served two terms as a national chief, from 1992–2002. With the support of General Faisal Tanjung, he made an unsuccessful bid for the national KNPI leadership in 1996, but General Hartono and Tutut, Suharto's daughter, supported another candidate from HMI, and in the end Maulana Isman of Golkar *kino* Kosogoro secured the job.³⁹ Djoko boasts that his father was a veteran of the revolution, which, as Djoko emphasized, afforded his father the more revered status of "independence veteran," as opposed to "defender veteran," the title earned by those involved in post-independence military operations like East Timor. When I arrived at the Hotel Mulya, just around the corner from the DPR building in Senayan, he was busy cutting deals. It was a typical scene for the middle of Ramadan, when so often well-dressed professionals of various stripes can be found sitting around dimly lit tables in air-conditioned hotel restaurants and cafes without ordering a thing, in spaces that have been transformed by arrays of conference tables made available as a reluctant courtesy by the hotels. The senior PAN official with whom Djoko was meeting somewhat circumspectly brought up the issue of the "youths" (*pemuda-pemuda*, read: guys available for mobilization) whom Djoko presumably had promised to put at his disposal. Djoko assured him, "no need to worry about the problem of troops."⁴⁰ Given his cooperation with PAN, his backing from Faisal Tanjung, and the Islamic-cut silk shirt he was wearing that day, one might be tempted to slot him in the "green" camp. However, Djoko complained that NU people say one thing and do another and "usually fuck things up [*suka ngawur*]," while "nationalists" are the most dependable to deal with due to their "common understanding."

Mangara Siahaan is a senior PDI-P party leader and a DPR-RI parliamentarian. Megawati has entrusted him with the seemingly permanent position of vice-secretary general of PDI-P because it is from that position that his skills as the party's

³⁸ Personal interview with Tjahyo Kumolo, Jakarta, October 27, 2006. He was trying to recover from Permadi's "prediction" that the next winning presidential ticket would be the "duet" of Megawati and Tutut (Suharto's daughter).

³⁹ Personal interview with Djoko Purwongemboro, Senayan (Jakarta), September 29, 2006.

⁴⁰ "Masalah pasukan, nggak usah khawatir."

most experienced field operative can be used with maximum effect. Unlike the other subjects, Mangara was never an OKP leader. As one of the main leaders of a 1960s-era Jakarta gang Legos,⁴¹ some of whose members later worked closely with Ali Moertopo's BAKIN intelligence agency, Mangara knows the situation on the streets as well as anyone else. Indeed, some of his Legos rivals in the 1960s, such as Yapto Soerjosoemarno of the Siliwangi Boys Club, later became the unchallenged leaders of OKP such as PP. Before getting into formal politics, Mangara became an action film star who tended to play *jago* and other varieties of thieves. We met at a table in the corner of the café of the Hotel Sultan, formerly the Hotel Hilton, where we both chain smoked Gudang Garam clove cigarettes near the end of Ramadan.⁴²

Inggard Joshua was the Jakarta (DKI) Chief of Pemuda Pancasila from 1999–2003. Before that time, he had held the post of West Jakarta chief since 1989, a position that he assumed after encouragement from below, following his prior successes in local business and real estate contracting. When we met, Inggard was a DKI parliamentarian for Golkar. As is true for the national PP chiefs Yapto and Yorrys, his ethnic background is mixed: he is a half-Chinese Menadonese Catholic.⁴³ As I was waiting for the interview in the Golkar faction lobby of the Jakarta DPRD-I, a nervous real estate developer specializing in small-scale district government buildings was also waiting for an audience; he took priority, although I had the prior appointment.⁴⁴ Like other PP leaders at his level, Inggard openly admitted that his boys were “thuggish” (*berbau premanisme*), but emphasized that he made it his personal mission to “share in their suffering” (*berbagi rasa*) and, through the organization, to “help them find work” through “cooperation with the private sector, whether in security or debt collection, but not in the sense of extortion.” Inggard shared the view of many below the national echelon of PP that Yapto had made a fatal misstep in forming his own political party, that his reputation had plummeted due to it, and that, because of it, Yapto was likely finally to lose his position as PP chief (after more than twenty-five years) at the next national congress.⁴⁵

Martius Latuperissa was the long-time late-New Order Medan chief of FKPP. For several years before 1998, he held a Golkar DPRD-I seat. After 1998, he enjoyed a

⁴¹ Legos, *Lelaki Goyang Senggol*. I have never been completely satisfied with my original translation of *Lelaki Goyang Senggol* as “The Nudge Rocker Boys.” See Rytter, “Pemuda Pancasila,” p. 138. A reviewer’s suggestion that the phrase be translated as “the Sharp-Elbow Boys” conveys the roughness of *senggol* better than “nudge” does, but this translation drops *goyang*, which can mean “rock” or “dance” or “shake things up” and, perhaps more recently, to get drunk or stoned. I chose “rocker” in the original translation as an attempt to index the era of the late 1950s and 1960s. *Senggol* may not even be as intrusive as “to elbow.” Simply brushing against someone in a crowd (or in a club or bar) also qualifies as *senggol*; it is the accusation that somebody has committed *senggol* that carries a threat of violence. Thus, the meaning of the name could range anywhere from the Bump-Into-Us-and-We’ll-Knock-You-Over Boys to the We’re-Unstable-and-Might-Elbow-You-But-Whatcha-Gonna-Do-About-It Boys.

⁴² Mangara Siahaan, Jakarta, October 26, 2006.

⁴³ Yapto is half Javanese, half Dutch Jew, while Yorrys is half Chinese, half Irianese (Papuan).

⁴⁴ Personal interview with Inggard Joshua, Jakarta, September 28, 2006.

⁴⁵ Yapto ended up prevailing at PP’s National Congress VIII, held in February 2009. Not only did he retain his post as national chief for another term, but his motion to channel PP’s “aspirations” to his Patriot Party, as PP had to Golkar until 1998, was carried. See “Yapto Kembali Pimpin PP,” *Gatra*, www.gatra.com/versi_cetak.php?id=123421, viewed February 23, 2009.

stint as *ketua* of Edi Sudrajat's PKP⁴⁶ in North Sumatra, through which he won another provincial parliamentary seat in 1999. When I last spoke with Martius in 1999, he called PKP the *Partai Kepala Preman*, the "Head Gangster Party." Unusually frank about his thievery and that of his fellow politicians, he said at the time: "I don't think the legislative institution is any good. Because I did nothing there for seven years but *steeaal*. Just like all the others, 'cept I admit it."⁴⁷ His fortunes have fallen since PKP collapsed. He briefly became head of PKB Medan for one month before being fired by Gus Dur, who called him "evil" (*jahat*).⁴⁸ When we met, he had become the Medan chief of the Suharto family-connected PKPB (Concern for the Nation Works and Deeds Party). Having had no luck reaching Martius by phone, after a tip from the groundskeeper at the health club across the street from a mosque where Martius was rumored to hang out, I finally tracked him down in an empty football stadium, where he had apparently been biding his time until his next move, playing cards with a handful of his young boys. He seemed delighted by my visit and skillfully concealed any surprise that I had managed to find him.

As if he knew that I would want to know how this blunt crook, who as FKPPi chief had always talked a tough red-and-white nationalism, had become for a time the North Sumatra boss of the Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI), Martius began our conversation with a long, well-informed, and Arabic-infused monologue about Islam. When we inevitably got around to the subject of his leadership of the FPI, he argued that he actually moderated its potentially explosive radicalism:

[I was the *ketua* of FPI in North Sumatra] from the time that it was formed. Now I handed it over to a friend. If I didn't take control, [FPI] would certainly be setting off bombs. Bombs exploding, Boom! Bang! As soon as I took control, this didn't happen! So why [did I take charge]? Because if I didn't, I'd be blamed anyways ... Sure, [FPI has connections to the army]. The Indonesian army has connections to everything. Even with the communists. Why? Because as the fortress wall of the nation, it has to have connections to all groups ... With corruptors, it has connections, with those who capture corruptors, it has relations. So with the army it depends on whom it favors. If it favors a monkey, the monkey wins! Here's a nice, tasty monkey. That's where [the army] will go.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ PKP, created as a Golkar splinter party to contest the 1999 elections after General Edi Sudrajat lost his bid for the chairmanship of Golkar, was badly crushed. See Edward Masters, "Indonesia's 1999 Elections: A Second Chance for Democracy," posted 1999, http://www.asiasociety.org/publications/update_indonesia.html.

⁴⁷ Personal interview with Martius Latuperissa, Medan, June 18, 1999. "Dan aku tidak menganggap lembaga legislatif sebagai lembaga yang baik. Karena aku di sana selama tujuh tahun ... mencuuuri aje. Sama dengan yang lain-lain, hanya bedanya aku ngaku orang tu ndak."

⁴⁸ Personal interview with Martius Latuperissa, Medan, October 18, 2006.

⁴⁹ Ibid. "Sejak terbentuk. Sekarang sudah saya kasih ke kawan. Kalau tidak ku pegang, ini pasti meledak bom semuanya. Bom meledak, Gembor! Gembor! Pas aku pegang, ini tidak. Kenapa ku bilang? Karena kalau tidak ku pegang, pasti yang dituduh juga aku ... [Loren: Kalau FPI kan juga berhubungan dengan tentara ...] Ada. Jadi kalau tentara Indonesia itu berhubungan dengan semuanya. Bahkan dengan komunis. Kenapa? Karena sebagai dinding bangsa ini dia harus berhubungan dengan semua kalangan. Dengan koruptor, dia berhubungan. Dengan yang menangkap koruptor, dia berhubungan. Maka tentara ini bergantung kemana dia berpihak. Kalau dia berpihak kepada monyet, monyet menang! ... Ini ada monyet bagus dan enak. Dia ke situ." *Gembor-gembor* means literally "shouting" and

Forty-year-old Darwin Harahap had recently lost a bid to hold onto his post as the *ketua* for Medan of GM-FKPPI (Young Generation-FKPPI) to fifty-something Nazaruddin Sihombing, who reputedly enjoyed the backing of the army chief of staff. Darwin was in the midst of formulating a strategy to challenge his replacement on account of the age factor.⁵⁰ A North Sumatra parliamentarian for Golkar when we spoke, he was among the least comfortable talking about politics, but also among the more revealing. His own parliamentary staff complained he was nearly impossible to reach and characterized his business as “*preman* stuff.” Notably stocky, Darwin sports bushy muttonchops. When we spoke at the Hotel Danau Toba, he tried to maintain his official composure as a group of five equally imposing men who called him *ketua* vied for his attention at a nearby table.

Boyke Turangan had been the Medan chief of Pemuda Pancasila at the close of the Suharto era. After 1998, he got involved in PDI-P, at first as the head of one of its youth branches, BMI (Indonesian Young Bulls). By the time we spoke, he had advanced to become the vice-chief of PDI-P Medan in a recent party caucus, but his position had been contested by rivals who accused him of engaging in money politics.⁵¹ He had yet to gain a parliamentary seat, though he was sure that he could secure a high ranking in the candidate list in the next elections. Truly of the streets, he boasted of his machismo and fighting skills. He is the head of the martial arts school Wadokai for all of Indonesia. He is a vice-chief of GM-FKPPI in Medan, and also holds a high provincial post in PP in Pekanbaru. When we met late at night at his home, I had to first wait for him to finish watching a B-grade American gangster film before he was ready to engage. In front of his house was parked a bright red jeep on whose hood he had mounted a set of massive bull horns during campaign season.

Bangkit Sitepu was a Medan parliamentarian with Golkar and the Medan chief of PP in 2006. He comes from the most humble of origins, having for a time worked as a junk collector (*tukang borong*) before amassing the capital to start his own minibus transport network. His minibus terminal is based in the parking lot of the shut-down *Hirako* (Karo Peoples' Entertainment) B-grade movie theater, in front of which washed-out hand-painted banners of low-budget Indonesian and Mandarin films still hang. As has been the case for years, he was most easily cornered early in the morning at the coffee shop adjacent to his terminal. Assembled before several of his close associates, he took the opportunity of our unscheduled meeting to speak in platitudes about the need for better education in Indonesia, his professed legislative platform. But when the time came for our scheduled interview, he played duck and cover, claiming to have a headache due to the stress of having to deal with countless followers looking for holiday cash hand-outs. His behind-the-scenes operator brother was more accessible in the DPRD-II parking lot, where he waxed eloquent about the fabulous business deals to be made with the Koreans.

ranting” and often implies “boastfully.” Considering the context and Martius’s separated, explosive enunciation of the phrase in our interview, it is here given as “Boom! Bang!” The usage also conveys the idea that bombing would be bragged about.

⁵⁰ By 1998, most OKP had formally capped the age of leaders at 45 or 50. When ignored as they often were, such limits became grounds for challenges. Personal interview with Darwin Harahap, Medan, October 19, 2006.

⁵¹ Personal interview with Boyke Turangan.

NO WIDESPREAD PATTERN OF LEGISLATIVE MURDERS

The striking pattern of political murders of parliamentary candidates observed in Thailand and the Philippines during their recent periods of “democratic consolidation” does not seem to have been duplicated in Indonesia thus far. One might say this indicates a certain progress.⁵² At least two possibilities might help explain this absence of violence. Following Benedict Anderson, we would conclude that the profitability of a parliamentary seat remains too low to warrant murder. This in turn would index the Indonesian parliament’s relative lack of political clout. Alternately, one might argue that in Indonesia there are easier ways to obtain a parliamentary seat without anything so idealized as a transparent election or so crude as the corporeal elimination of one’s rivals. A combination of both of these explanations is plausible. Indonesia’s parliamentarians do not have the sort of influence that representatives have in Thailand or the Philippines because they also must contend with still more powerful regional executives, as well as the still decisive army territorial structure. Second, due to fact that Indonesia had adopted the party-list electoral system rather than a first-past-the-post district electoral system, it was comparatively easier for a parliamentary candidate in Indonesia to edge his way to a higher ranking.⁵³

We might also explore the possibility that such murders are occurring in Indonesia, but remain below the radar due to the nature of the electoral system. Would-be seat holders may not be highly visible in the media as they maneuver within parties to secure a higher place on a party list rather than openly competing for votes in a district. Indeed, there are some oddities that may suggest as much, which still require further investigation. For instance, at least two parliamentarians from PKP, the first major Golkar splinter, died very young and at around the same time. Was this mere coincidence? Posman Siahaan, who held a national parliamentary seat in 1999 with PKP, and Imron Batubara, who held a North Sumatra seat, were both prominent Pemuda Pancasila leaders in their respective districts. One source told me that Imron died from injuries after he fell off a podium. Nurlif stated, with a wink, that Posman died because it was “his time ... he was sick.” Martius Latuperissa, also a frustrated ex-PKP leader, seemed to confirm the suspicion of foul play:

Golkar was dominant ... What had to be killed by Golkar were all its offshoots. That’s why there haven’t been any offshoots of Golkar that are permanent. They can’t live. [They] die a slow death ... And, Posman of course had to be offed. This guy [was a hypocrite], had too much of, in Medan terms, a straight index finger pointing forwards and a crooked pinky curled backwards.⁵⁴

⁵² Anderson, “Murder and Progress in Modern Siam.” Sidel, *Capital, Coercion, and Crime*.

⁵³ It remains to be seen whether changes to the electoral system (which makes it more like the Philippines and Thailand) beginning with the 2009 parliamentary elections will lead to more political murders.

⁵⁴ Personal interview with Martius Latuperissa, October 18, 2006. “Golkar kan dominan ... Makanya yang harus di bunuh Golkar adalah seluruh pecahan Golkar. Maka seluruh pecahan Golkar itu nggak ada yang permanen. Nggak ada yang bisa hidup. Seluruh yang pecah dari Golkar, mati pelan-pelan ... Kalau Posman memang harus dihabisin ... Manusia ini kan kalau bahasa kita, bahasa kami orang Medan ini, telunjuk lurus, kelingking berkait.”

Such reports suggest that someone had it in for Posman not because this someone was linked to a competitor for Posman's seat (the typical motive in Thailand, for example), but rather because Posman, who was crooked himself, had been pointing the finger at the wrong people.

TALKING POLITICS

Whatever challenges and opportunities securing parliamentary seats have presented these OKP leaders, they must perform their functions as parliamentarians. They assume their seats with, at minimum, an idea of how some segment of the public expects them to perform and with some prior notion of the scope of the vocation of legislation. Consequently, they must be prepared to report on their activities in this capacity and articulate some vision of the politically possible. That such articulations tend to fall short of what some ideal democratic public might expect does not really indicate a failure on the representatives' part to live up to these ideals so much as it indicates the limitations of the popular expectations themselves. One might say, in fact, that the new representatives' skill at containing expectations becomes one of their most important functions, one for which they can issue a more than satisfactory progress report.

Parliamentarians recognize that they bear a certain responsibility to their constituents, but they tend to think of this responsibility less in terms of public accountability and more in terms of the price of their authority. *Wibawa*, the charismatic form of authority some scholars have identified with a Javanese idea of power,⁵⁵ remains important, but, according to Nurlif, it is not an inherited or implicit personal trait, but must be earned:

Wibawa comes from work, *wibawa* comes from achievement, *wibawa* comes from works and deeds, *wibawa* comes from public image. Not from wearing a three-piece suit. That's not *wibawa*. We're respected if we can do something in the public interest. It's public image.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ A thorough discussion of the literature related to Benedict Anderson's seminal essay is beyond the scope of this chapter. See Miriam Budiardjo, *Aneka Pemikiran Tentang Kuasa Dan Wibawa* (Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1984); and Benedict Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture," in *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990 [1972]). One might simply note that the term *wibawa* is still widely used in Indonesia, though its meaning seems to extend across the entire range of distinctions Weber attempted to make among forms of authority. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978). In other words, my sense is that *wibawa* is at once "traditional," charismatic, and rational-legal. The term *wewenang* refers exclusively to the rational-legal authority of public office, but I submit that the way *wibawa* is used in reference to office holders, and the way that the representatives themselves consider it important, makes the term *wewenang* almost incidental. Therefore *wibawa* bleeds into the specific rational-legal authority meant to be reserved for *wewenang*.

⁵⁶ Personal interview with Nurlif. "Wibawa karena kerja, wibawa karena prestasi, wibawa karena karya, wibawa karena citra. Bukan kerena pake jas tiga lapis. Bukan karena itu wibawa. Kita dihormati karena kita bisa berbuat sesuatu untuk kepentingan masyarakat. Itu citra."

The lack of *wibawa*, on the other hand, may constitute a damaging political liability, according to Darwin:

Wibawa is still needed [for a politician]. If we don't have *wibawa*, we'd get cursed out. If we do, they respect us. They're polite to us, they think, "Hey, this guy's a former boss [*ketua*]." ⁵⁷

Darwin expressed less of a sense than Nurlif did that *wibawa* must be earned, and he suggested somewhat circularly, instead, that *wibawa* comes from being recognized as a former boss and also that having *wibawa* means one's authority as a former boss is recognized.

OKP leaders have proven to be assets to the new political parties for a number of reasons. Parties recognize that the OKP leaders have on-the-ground experience and access to substantial existing networks. No doubt they can mobilize voters and bodies for party rallies, but the importance of the networks that OKP leaders can mobilize outlasts the campaign season, which was their most important window of utility during the New Order. Attaching their networks to local party offices might be said to bring into existence the local bases of the parties themselves, which without them would be little more than names, logos, and a central committees. As Ruhut put this:

The political parties recruit lots of OKP figures. That's what's happening now. Maybe we're recruited because when we associated in OKP, the OKP were just like political parties that are in, now in, thirty-three provinces. In each province they exist. The new parties at first had nothing. But thanks to the OKP figures, they have tentacles [lit. "wings"] right to the bottom. That's why now the parties have national levels, provincial levels, municipal levels, and even subdistrict levels. [Furthermore] OKP figures stand out in the parties [more than students do]. Because at the campuses it's all just theory. All text book. Different than reality. In the OKP, we're field operatives. Practical people. The political world is practical, so we stand right out. ⁵⁸

The fact that a wide array of parties found former OKP members attractive and chose to woo them necessarily produced a competitive market for their services. However, at the same time, these men tended to face pressures to remain true to old loyalties. At least the rhetoric of old loyalties is something they felt compelled to cite when defending their choices to put themselves at the service of one party or another. Boyke Turangan explained:

⁵⁷ Personal interview with Darwin Harahap. "Perlu. Karena kita kalau tidak *wibawa* bisa dimaki-maki ... [Kalau] kita ber*wibawa* kita dihormati mereka. Mereka sopan terhadap kita, mereka berpikir, 'Wah, Ini bekas ketua ini.'"

⁵⁸ Personal interview with Ruhut Situmpul. "Begitu juga partai-partai lain, banyak merikrut tokoh-tokoh OKP. Itu sekarang yang terjadi ... Mungkin kenapa kita direkrut, waktu kita menghimpun OKP, kan OKP ini juga sama dengan partai politik, dia ada di, sekarang di 33 propinsi. Di semua propinsi dia ada. Sedangkan partai-partai baru, mungkin awalnya tidak ada apa-apa. Tapi karena tokoh-tokoh OKP ini, dia punya sayap sampai ke bawah. Jadi semua partai itu sekarang sudah punya partai tingkat pusat, tingkat propinsi, tingkat kabupaten / kota, bahkan tingkat kecamatan ... Lebih menonjol OKP ... Karena kalau kampus kan mereka teori. Semua kan teks book. Dengan kenyataan kan beda. Sebab kalau OPK, kita ini kan orang lapangan. Orang praktek. Dunia politik itu praktek, jadi kita langsung menonjol."

Yeah, they said I was a traitor when I became the *ketua* of BMI. Amran YS [who joined PAN] said I was a traitor. That guy Donald [Sitabalong, until recently the North Sumatra head of PP, with Golkar] said I was a traitor. "Get out of PP, join BMI," he said. "Who said I was getting out of PP?! Look, I'm a PP member! PP is independent. That was the outcome of the congress!"⁵⁹

Indeed, Pemuda Pancasila presents a unique case, because in fact the organization officially decided to let its members join whatever party they wanted, and it's main leaders joined separate parties. Still, though largely motivated by the desire to find the easiest opportunity to gain a seat, some PP figures like Boyke take pride in a certain level of commitment and consistency. When PDI-P fractured and spawned PDI-P Pembaruan (PDI-P Renewal, led by Roy Janis), Boyke was offered 1.5 billion rupiah to consolidate that party, but he refused:

I don't want to be called an opportunist [*kutu loncat*, lit. "hopping lice"]. Like hopping there, hopping here, wipes you out! Besides, most people in parties, their ultimate goal is to become the King of Cattle. But not me! The legislative door is just a step away. Two years from now, in the next elections, as head of the [PDI-P] campaign for Medan, I have the chance to be in the [North Sumatra DPRD]. For sure, I'll get number two. Number one is for the guy in the Central Committee, ya know? What would I switch parties for? Oh, yeah, I've had all kinds of offers. Yapto asked me directly, "What's your ranking in PDI?" "Number 6, Brother." "Forget about it, switch to Patriot, number one!" "Nah, don't sweat it, Brother."⁶⁰

Here, Boyke calculates the long-term value of a near-certain future seat to be considerably higher than the short-term head price he could earn as a new party operator.

OKP leaders universally agreed that their prior experience prepared them for parliamentary politics in a number of ways, and that their ability to provide parties with ready-made local bases was not their sole or even primary asset. It is revealing that when they were asked what politically relevant lessons they had drawn from their experience in the OKP, two parliamentarians responded first by stating that the most important lessons had nothing to do with conducting politics within the parliament, but concerned, rather, how to deal with troublesome protesters. Darwin

⁵⁹ Personal interview with Boyke Turangan. "Ya itu mereka kan bilang kita katanya pengkhianat. Kita menjadi ketua BMI, bilang kita pengkhianat. Amran YS, bilang kita pengkhianat. Orang Donald, aku pengkhianat. 'Keluar dari PP, masuk BMI,' katanya. 'Siapa bilang aku keluar dari PP?! Aku anggota PP kok! PP itu independen. Hasil musyawarah!'"

⁶⁰ Ibid. "Ya, kita memang nggak mau aja lah jadi kutu loncat. Istilahnya loncat sana, loncat sini, capek kita. Kalau orang berpartai ya, kebanyakan dia itu, tujuan akhirnya itu adalah Raja Sapi. Sementara kita tidak. Pintu legislatif itu tinggal selangkah lagi. Menunggu dua tahun lagi ni, pemilu nanti ni, kita itu, sebagai ketua pemenang pemilu dari PDI-Perjuangan kota Medan, kita dah punya peluang, mau jadi DPRD tingkat I? Minimal nomor dua pasti aku dapat. Nomor satunya orang DPP, DPD. Kan gitu ... Ngapain aku jadi pindah partai lagi. Oooh, kita udah menghadapi segala macam tawaran. Bang Yapto langsung bilang, 'Kau di PDI calon nomor berapa?' 'Nomor enam, Bang.' 'Ya udah, pindah kau ke Patriot, nomor satu!' 'Nggak usah lah, Bang ...'"

compared those with experience in OKP to those novices who lacked such experience:

They're kinda stiff dealing with [*menghadapi*, lit. "facing-off against"] the people. We do it often and also hang out with *pemuda*, so for us its easy to deal with society. We know what society wants ... For example, if ya know, there's a demonstration, we know how to handle that. The newly deployed are hesitant.⁶¹

Achmad Arief of PAN said nearly the same thing:

If demonstrators come, we can handle that [*hadapin*]. People threaten us, we're used to dealing with it. Because we're used to brawling in the field. Normally people we deal with like that, demonstrators who pound the tables, pound the doors. We just sit back calmly and watch, ha ha ha, right? Because we're used to it. We're used to being chased with swords. "Is that all you got?!"⁶²

Though such views would seem to suggest a purely antagonistic position *vis-à-vis* the constituents these newly minted politicians are meant to represent, they paint but a partial picture. The OKP veterans' notion of representation derives from the ways in which they have become used to relating to and meeting the needs of their OKP members:

We fight for our members so they can make a living, ya know? So they can live. Just about the same thing, we parliamentarians think about how we can try to make them [i.e., constituents] grow and develop. If we lead an OKP, our members are limited, but if we become a member of parliament, our duties are broad. It's easy to mobilize members. "This is our program, just do it!" [But constituents] make a lot of demands on us. Like during a campaign, we make promises to do something. "Hey, what about that thing?"⁶³

⁶¹ Personal interview with Darwin Harahap. "Mereka agak kaku menghadapi rakyat. Kalau kita sudah sering, kemudian kita juga bergaul dengan para pemuda, terutama masyarakat pada umumnya, kita gampang menghadapi masyarakat itu. Kita tahu apa yang dimaui oleh masyarakat ... Misalnya ada demo gitu, kita sudah biasa menghadapinya. Kalau mereka yang baru terjun mereka ragu-ragu."

⁶² Personal interview with Achmad Arief, Medan, October 15, 2006. Achmad Arief is a PAN parliamentarian for Medan, and also a Medan-level PP official. He admits to growing up in a PP environment, though early on he was more active in Muhammadiyah Youth. His father was an *ustad* (Islamic teacher), and his mother never approved of him socializing with PP boys. "Datang sebuah demo kita hadapin, orang ancam-ancam kita ya biasa kita hadapi itu. Kita udah biasa berkelahi di lapangan. Biasanya orang-orang yang menghadapi yang kayak gitu kan, datang demonstrasi gebrak-gebrak meja, gebrak pintu. Kita sih selow aja lihat begitu ha ha ha, iya kan? Karena kita udah biasa. Kita udah biasa dikejar-kejar pake pedang. 'Ah, itu aja?'"

⁶³ Personal interview with Darwin Harahap. "Kita memperjuangkan anggota kita bagaimana supaya berusaha, kan begitu. Kemudian mereka bisa hidup. Hampir sama, begitu juga kita di DPR bagaimana kita berusaha agar supaya mereka bisa berkembang, bisa terbangun ... Jadi ketika kita memimpin OKP, itu terbatas anggota kita, ketika menjadi anggota dewan, tugas kita itu luas ... Umpamanya anggota, gampang mengarahkannya, 'Ini program kita, silahkan!' ... Ya mereka banyak minta dari kita. Misalnya pada waktu kita kampanye, kita berjanji untuk melakukan ini, 'Ini, mana itu?'"

While a certain allergy to the people Darwin is meant to represent persisted and could be traced in his speech, his impatience was expressed as a lament over their misplaced, exaggerated expectations. He took to heart what he perceived as their best interests, defined in the concrete terms of the New Order as maintaining basic public welfare and, if possible, raising living standards. This is the struggle he could wage on their behalf. How such a struggle is actually waged, however, has little to do with enacting a role as legislator and making new laws or throwing out old ones that would be in the interests of his members-cum-constituents. Instead, Darwin saw his function as merely that of a conduit, as if he were literally providing a relay service, delivering messages from constituents to the authorities who actually had the power to improve their lives: "As members of the parliament, we only take up their aspirations, take them up and forward them to, where? To the executive, like that."⁶⁴

Indeed, despite the fact that he held a provincial-level parliamentary seat with Golkar, one of the biggest parties, Darwin never seemed to entertain the idea that he might actually amend or create laws. The police crackdown on gambling had taken a serious toll on his own members, who derived their primary revenue from it. As Bangkit's case above illustrated, supporters increasingly resorted to turning to their bosses in parliament for cash subsidies. Being hit up, in turn, exemplifies the sort of relentless demand that, for Darwin, amounted to a positive job hazard. Why, I asked, couldn't he work to legalize gambling?

That's up to the government, right, what about the government? The government outlaws it, why should we oppose the government? We fight for the interests of society, but if those interests are wrong, are we going to fight for what's wrong? Surely not?! [Q: Who decides what's right and wrong?] The laws. The laws have said so. [Q: But parliamentarians make the laws, right?] We make the regional laws, but this is national, right? It's clear the government has outlawed it.⁶⁵

Technically, Darwin was correct that national laws would take precedence in this case. But his general attitude suggested a near total lack of any impulse to legislate or otherwise use his position to make basic policy changes. A parliamentarian's party position and deference to the executive tends to put him in an easier position with his OKP members or constituents, providing a justification to ask them to accept unpopular policies, while simultaneously convincing them that he is not acting in their interests precisely because he best knows their true interests. As Ruhut explained:

⁶⁴ Ibid. "Kita sebagai anggota dewan, kita kan hanya menyerap aspirasi mereka, menyerap diteruskan kemana, ke eksekutif kan begitu."

⁶⁵ Ibid. "Kita kembalikan kepada pemerintah begitu, gimana pemerintah? Pemerintah melarang, kenapa kita harus menentang pemerintah? Berjuang untuk kepentingan masyarakat, tapi kalau kepentingan masyarakatnya salah, apakah itu kita akan perjuangkan yang salah? Tentu kan tidak?! [Question: Siapa yang menentukan apa yang salah dan apa yang benar?] Ya undang-undang, Undang kan sudah menyatakan. [Question: Tapi anggota dewan yang membuat undang-undang kan, Pak?] Kita membuat undang-undang di daerah. Secara nasional, kan? Jelas-jelas pemerintah sudah melarang."

Everything can be resolved with lobbying, yeah? Maybe a party policy is not well-liked by my *ormas*, PP. For example, SBY is anti-*premanism*, but PP lives from it. I make them understand. I say, "Our government doesn't want this, don't mess around. You'll have to deal with me and you don't want that!" That's it! ... At first they're stubborn, they can't accept it 'cuz that's their life. But the government is committed to it, so now they're finding other work, all sorts of professions.⁶⁶

An obvious contradiction between the interests of Ruhut's OKP, PP, and the agenda of his party, PD, is thus sidestepped.

Potential interparty conflicts within the parliament, too, tend to be handled using the kinds of lobbying and personal approaches these cadres learned through their experience in the KNPI. Most agreed that it is far easier to "lobby" among other parliamentarians who share a common background in OKP than it is to deal with those who don't share such a background:

Because we've been close from the start. When lobbying happens, we make an approach, what's our attitude towards them? So with our [common] presence in the OKP before, we are easily able to carry out lobbying, like that.⁶⁷

Note that "lobbying" here does not refer to an outside, interested party trying to make a case for a policy that he hopes lawmakers will implement. Rather, this sort of "lobbying" occurs among lawmakers themselves as a kind of mutual wheel-greasing, or it is applied by lawmakers as a salve to reduce the sting of unpopular policies on their own constituencies.

None of this is to say, however, that parliamentary disputes, when they occur, are always neatly resolved. Here, too, former OKP members bring to the parliament the street experience they gained through their organizations. In their narratives, they tend to reduce even the shrewdest and dirtiest political maneuvers and ploys to little more than games:

In my view, the values in PP are sportsmanlike [to a high degree]. If a guy really breathes the spirit of PP ideology, he's sportsmanlike. [So in the parliament], it's easy for us to overcome problems among the political parties, because we know all the tricks, like pressure, mobs. That's all nothing to us ... For example, in this political party case recently, the guys were ... terrorized. To us it's nothing,

⁶⁶ Personal interview with Ruhut Situmpul. "Ya semua bisa diselesaikan dengan lobi, ya. Ada kebijaksanaan daripada partai mungkin tidak kena di *ormas* saya Pemuda Pancasila. Contohnya, SBY kan anti-premanisme, sedangkan kehidupan PP dari tu. Saya kasih pengertian ... Jadi saya bilang, 'Ini pemerintah nggak mau begini, kita jangan macam-macam. Nanti anda berhadapan dengan saya kan nggak enak.' Ah itu! ... Mula-mula mereka keras, nggak bisa terima karena memang kehidupan mereka begitu. Tapi karena pemerintah concern melaksanakan itu, mereka sudah beralih ke tempat pekerjaan lain. Mereka alih profesi macam-macam."

⁶⁷ Personal interview with Darwin Harahap. "Karena kita sudah dekat dari dulu. Lobi ini bisa terjadi kita ada pendekatan, bagaimana sikap kita terhadap mereka? Jadi dengan keberadaan dulunya kita di OKP, kita mudah dan mampu melakukan lobi, kan begitu."

Brother, because we're used to warring, too. We're used to brandishing swords, too.⁶⁸

From time to time, clashes over policies have turned physical, such as during a heated debate over a proposed fuel price (BBM, Bahan Bakar Minyak) hike. The views of Nurlif of Golkar, which supported the hike, collided with the views of Mangara Siahaan of PDI-P, which opposed it.⁶⁹ They clashed not only on the policy issue, but also in terms of the tone of their characterizations of what transpired between them and also in terms of their normative judgments about the place of interparty physical conflict in a parliamentary democracy:

We were discussing the BBM issue at the time. Maybe our friends from PDI-P couldn't accept the way Agung [Laksono] was leading the session. Maybe. So maybe there was someone who left his seat and approached Agung's seat. Protesting to Agung. I went over, I said, "Hey cut it out." Not a brawl. I tried to prevent something bad from happening at the DPR ... We don't have to imitate Korea. Like this matter of brawling. I'll block that. Now, when I tried to stop it, people thought just going to the front was brawling, but it wasn't. There were no punches thrown, none. Yeah, the atmosphere was heated. But I made sure that the parliamentary leadership wouldn't be treated badly. That's all ... Hey, this is the DPR, this is the forum of democracy. I can't force others to follow me. If we agree to raise democracy high, there's a mechanism, right? We don't have to do it by brawling. I say democracy is not brawling. Brawling is already anarchy, right? [Question: Wasn't that sort of thing common at KNPI congresses?] But those weren't political fora, right? Those were just young kids, in the context of seizing power, getting hot-headed. It's understandable if kids get hot-headed easily. But if politicians get so hot-headed they start brawling, that's just not right.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Personal interview with Achmad Arief. "Saya lihat nilai-nilainya dari PP ini ... lebih sportif ya. Sebenarnya tinggi di PP ini. Kalau orang-orang menjiwai ideologi Pemuda Pancasila, sportif orangnya. Oh kalau dewan, di dewan saya begini, di dewan ini kan, di dewan ya, ditanya kalau antara partai politik ya kita mudah mengatasi persoalan-persoalan, karena kita udah tahu koq trik-trik yang sifatnya tekanan, mob ... Ah ini sih kecil bagi saya ... Ya contohnya kasus partai politik seperti kemarin ya, orang-orang ya, diteror. Kita kecil ya Bang ya karena kita biasa perang-perang juga. Angkat-angkat pedang juga udah biasa."

⁶⁹ One might assume that the fuel price hike had direct bearing on PDI-P leader Megawati's family business, as her husband owns gas stations. A rise in prices would make things hard on her lower-wage supporters, but also reduce the government subsidies of fuel prices.

⁷⁰ Personal interview with Nurlif. "Pada saat itu sedang membicarakan soal BBM. Teman-teman dari PDI-P mungkin tidak bisa menerima cara Pak Agung memimpin rapat. Mungkin. Terus mungkin ada yang datang dari tempat duduk ke tempat Pak Agung. Memprotes ke tempat Pak Agung. Saya datang, saya bilang, 'Nggak boleh begitu.' Bukan berantem. Saya mencegah jangan sampe ada sesuatu yang terjadi yang tidak baik di DPR ... Ya kita kan nggak harus meniru Korea. Kalau soal berantem itu. Saya mencegah itu. Nah, cuman kan waktu kita mencegah, kita maju ke depan dianggap berkelahi, tapi tidak ada perkelahian. Tidak ada pukul-pukulan tidak ada. Bahwa suasananya agak emosional, ya. Tapi saya mencegah jangan sampai pimpinan dewan itu diperlakukan tidak baik. Itu aja ... Lho ini kan di DPR, ini kan forum demokrasi. Kan tidak bisa memaksa orang lain harus ikut saya. Ya kalau kita sepakat untuk menjunjung tinggi demokrasi, ya mekanismenya kan ada. Tidak harus dengan cara berkelahi. Menurut saya demokrasi, tidak berkelahi. Kalau berkelahi, udah anarki kan itu ... [Question: Di kongres KNPI misalnya, sering terjadi seperti itu.] Kan itu bukan forum politik."

I clashed with Yorrys ... I clashed with Speaker Agung Laksono. Yorrys was backing up Agung, in the end I had it out with Agung [and] confronted Yorrys ... It was a matter of principle [because] we rejected the BBM hike. At the end of the day, Golkar will always support the government. They had a coalition [to enact the hike]. So, when Agung was leading the session, he was playing around, didn't have the guts to decide [not to enact the hike]. So we were pissed off, man! As far as I'm concerned, as long as a clash is still in within the DPR hall, it's totally legit, its part of the nature of democracy ... But as soon as the commotion broke out, Yorrys brought in guys from outside. Tried to bring them into the complex from outside. He brought in Irianese, ya know? Oooh ... My friends called the [PDI-P] *satgas* [security wing] right away. It was almost a bloodbath that day. I said, "Who called in the *satgas*? This isn't their business! It's the business of parliamentarians, an internal affair." I said, "Yorrys, why the hell did you bring in guys from outside? You wanna screw around like this in the DPR? You really have no clue about your place! Besides it's not even your business! It's between me and Agung, the speaker of the DPR! If you wanna fight, let's go, let's have it out outside!"⁷¹

Such frontal conflicts in parliament, however, seem to be exceptions to the rule, at least outside of Jakarta. Indeed, for Darwin Harahap, political competition *in toto* comes to a grinding halt after the elections:

I think the time for competition [among parties] is during the campaign only. After the campaign it's over. No more, right? Only if there's a certain conflict of interest is there competition, after that it's over. There's no competition [in the parliament]. It's over. Why should there still be competition when they've worked it all out? We have to remember, religion teaches us that we're all brothers. If we're brothers, why should we compete? As brothers, we have a single goal. If it's over, it's over! [If there's some conflict of interest], there's a way to reach an understanding, and lobby. Then it's over.⁷²

Itu anak-anak muda dalam rangka merebut kekuasaan kan emosi. Anak-anak muda emosi, wajar lah. Tapi kalau politisi emosi sampai berkelahi, itu kan nggak bener itu."

⁷¹ Personal interview with Mangara Siahaan. "Saya ama Yorrys, bentrok ... Saya bentrok dengan ketua DPR Agung Laksono. Yorrys back-up Agung. Akhirnya saya ribut sama Agung, akhirnya kita konfrontasi sama Yorrys ... Ini kan prinsip saja bahwa kita menolak kenaikan BBM. Bagaimanapun Golkar partai pendukung pemerintah. Mereka berkoalisi putuskan itu. Nah pada waktu memimpin sidang, memang Agung bermain-main, tidak berani putuskan untuk BBM tidak naik. Nah, kita marah dong! ... Menurut hemat saya selama bentrokan itu masih di ruang DPR itu sah-sah saja, itu sebagian dari alam demokrasi ... Tapi ketika ribut-ribut terjadi Yorrys memasukan orang dari luar. Dari luar mau memasukkan ke komplek. Dia bawa Irian-Irian, kan. Oooo ... teman-teman saya kebetulan langsung panggil satgas. Hampir banjir darah hari itu juga. Saya bilang, 'Siapa yang mendatangkan satgas? Ini nggak ada urusan sama satgas PDI Perjuangan. Ini urusan anggota dewan, urusan dalam.' Saya bilang, 'Yorrys koq kamu datangkan orang dari luar?! Masak di DPR you main-main kayak gini? Nggak tahu diri banget sih! Lagipula persoalan saya bukan persoalan you. Persoalan saya kan dengan Agung, ketua DPR! Bukan dengan anda! Kalau kita mau fight, ayo kita fight diluar.'"

⁷² Personal interview with Darwin Harahap. "Saya kira waktu bersaing itu pas pada waktu kampanye saja. Pada waktu selesai kampanye sudah selesai. Tidak ada lagi kan? Pada saat mempunyai suatu kepentingan saja yang bersaing, setelah itu selesai ... Tidak ada persaingan. Selesai. Kenapa harus bersaing lagi, orang sudah selesai semua kok. Jadi harus diingat, agama

For Darwin, the meaning of political conflict was fighting with competitors to gain seats. Once seats are securely sat, the only task remaining is to divvy out the shares.

There is no significant clash of party ideologies, at least in the view of these OKP leaders, because everyone should easily agree that the task at hand is delivering concrete public goods. Nurlif was one of the few interviewees who clearly articulated his party platform, and it is no coincidence that he understood it to be universal to all parties:

The Golkar Party's vision is in the framework of social welfare [*mensejahterakan masyarakat*, lit., "welfarizing society"]. Social welfare via the achievements of the party. Also, we can put government affairs in order from the center to the regions. For that reason it is proper that we want the opportunity to be in power ... Not because we want power.⁷³

Speaking in a similar vein, Djoko Purwongembo told me that not only do the parties have no reason to argue, but neither do government branches. In his view, institutionalized checks and balances are obstacles to performance, ill-suited to Indonesia, which would best be eliminated:

To my mind, it's not about a division of power. But rather a distribution of power. A sharing of tasks, but in a national framework, a national family. [Within] the Indonesian nation, one thing assigned to the executive [branch], [another to] the legislative, [another to] the judicial ... But if it's divided like it is, well, the result is like it is now. Whenever there's a working session with a minister, it's just head-to-head only, so what happens? Disharmony. Our problems as a nation are heavy, yeah, really heavy, problems with unemployment and all sort of other problems ... So nothing gets done until the problems get worse and worse as a result of [this] disharmony among government institutions. We need harmony. Harmony doesn't mean corruption. Don't get me wrong.⁷⁴

menyatakan bahwasanya kita itu bersaudara. Kalau kita bersaudara kenapa kita harus bersaing? Bahwasanya kita bersaudara punya satu tujuan. Kalau selesai ya selesai ... Kan ada satu cara untuk mencapai suatu kesepakatan, dan lobi-lobi. Selesai."

⁷³ Personal interview with Nurlif. "Visi partai Golkar adalah dalam rangka untuk mensejahterakan masyarakat. Mensejahterakan rakyat melalui prestasi partai. Kemudian bisa menertibkan urusan pemerintahan mulai dari pusat sampai ke daerah. Oleh karena itu kan wajar, kalau kita ingin mendapatkan peluang untuk berkuasa ... Bukan karena ingin berkuasa."

⁷⁴ Personal interview with Djoko Purwongembo. "Di benak saya bukan pemisahan kekuasaan ... Tapi distribution of power ... Pembagian tugas, tapi itu tetap dari situ kerangka bangsa, satu keluarga bangsa. Bangsa Indonesia, yang satu ditugaskan di eksekutif, di legislatif, di yudikatif ... Tapi kalau dipisah begitu, maka yang terjadi banyak kayak sekarang ini. Setiap kali raker dengan menteri, itu jadi head to head only, sehingga apa yang terjadi? Disharmoni. Masalah bangsa sudah berat, yach, sudah cukup berat, masalah pengangguran, masalah macem-macam. Situasi nggak jalan, sehingga yang terjadi adalah semakin berat lagi karena tadi, disharmoni antar lembaga negara. Harusnya kan harmoni, Pak. Harmoni bukan berarti KKN, lho. Jangan salah juga yach."

Djoko here expressed, of course, the familiar integralistic state idea.⁷⁵ What was surprising, however, was that he did so not from a high executive position (an executive making this argument would clearly be justifying autocracy) but, rather, as a member of parliament, who thereby was volunteering to surrender power that, as a parliamentarian of this new era, he could just as well fortify and expand. When seen from that perspective, Djoko's convictions seem almost sincere.

The parliamentarians tended to share the view that electoral reform has lowered the bar to entry into the parliament and led to disappointing outcomes. And yet the tones with which they articulated this lament carried valences that said much about their views regarding what an ideally functioning legislature should actually do. Martius Latuperissa was characteristically frank:

The parliament is much worse than in prior years. Because as time goes on, the more the people in it aren't fit. From experience its obvious, the [DPR] is a place to quickly change your status and social situation ... Much faster than stealing. Much faster than becoming an official. If you want to become an official, you have to go through a process. From level two, get a promotion, only at the highest levels do you get money. Right? In [the DPR], not. As soon as you get a seat, tap tap tap, right in the money.⁷⁶

His grievance was not that parliament now was more corrupt than it had been before, but rather that the post-Suharto electoral reforms had democratized corruption and leveled a meritocracy of pilferage. Nurlif echoed the "unfit" critique with a particularly paternalistic and anti-democratic disdain:

The quality of politicians [now] is by no means certain to be any better than those of the past. Right? Because now, whoever can influence the people, whoever has charisma in the eyes of the public, whoever maybe is supported by votes, is going to get elected, not because of quality. Not because of any process of cadre-ization as a politician, but he can pop up from god knows where, suddenly become a parliamentary candidate, suddenly become a politician.⁷⁷

Absent the cynicism of Martius, Nurlif professed a conviction that properly trained and indoctrinated functionaries could better serve the public good as defined by Golkar. Inggard Joshua adopted a middle view:

⁷⁵ Marsillam Simanjuntak, *Pandangan Negara Integralistik: Sumber, Unsur, Dan Riwayatnya Dalam Persiapan Uud 1945*, Cet. 1st ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1994).

⁷⁶ Personal interview with Martius Latuperissa. "Kalau di Dewan itu jauh lebih buruk dari pada tahun-tahun sebelumnya. Karena semakin hari, semakin tidak tepat orangnya. Karena dari perjalanan kelihatan, Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat itu adalah salah satu tempat yang paling cepat merubah baik status maupun keadaan sosial. Status dan martabat. Jauh lebih cepat daripada mencuri. Jauh lebih cepat daripada jadi pejabat. Kalau kau mau jadi pejabat, kau harus melalui proses. Dari pangkat dua, naik jabatan, sampai tinggi dia baru dapat uang. Iya kan? Kalau di dewan, nggak. Begitu duduk, tap tap tap langsung ke urusan uang."

⁷⁷ Personal interview with Nurlif. "Kualitas politsi belum tentu lebih bagus dibandingkan dengan yang dulu-dulu. Iya kan? Karena sekarang siapa yang bisa mempengaruhi rakyat, siapa yang punya kharisma di mata publik, siapa yang mungkin punya dukungan suara, akan terpilih tapi bukan karena kualitas. Bukan karena proses kaderisasi sebagai politisi, tapi dia bisa muncul entah darimana, tiba-tiba menjadi calon anggota DPR, tiba-tiba menjadi politisi."

When I was in Pemuda Pancasila, eh, my friends in the political party saw what I achieved. Of course they were, um, interested. In the end I wanted to be a politician. I saw that at the time the best party platform clearly was, um, Golkar's. But after I got in, it turns out it was a lot of, ah, smoke and mirrors. So I saw the need for change to promote a sense of unity with, um, a spirit, a spirit like that of the Youth Pledge, like when we dissolved ourselves back then, so many ethnic groups becoming one nation!⁷⁸

For Inggard, Golkar turned out to be just as self-congratulatory and self-serving as the other parties, but he maintained his faith that it all could be overcome through a determined promotion of a genuine sense of nationalism.

Finally, our OKP leaders disagreed on what reforms have meant and should mean for civil-military relations. Djoko of the Veterans' Youth (PPM), in line with his integralistic views, complained that reform had tended to pit civilians against the military:

If we talk about a civil-military dichotomy, we don't need to make an issue of it because if we truly adhere to our constitution, which has [a national defense duty], in effect, there is no civil-military dichotomy. My buddies think I'm like a soldier. When people first see me they think I'm at least at the rank of brigadier general, or major general, or at least a colonel. Something like that. Maybe it's because I appear so highly trained. We [in PPM] used to have something called the Yudaputra Regiment, uniformed, like the army. Not like other organizations, where guys come from wherever, descended from whomever, give them a jacket, they wear it. But no militancy. No spirit of the corps.⁷⁹

Most leaders of Pemuda Pancasila, though they were popularly regarded during the New Order as operatives held on a short leash by the military, have actually long resented such subordination. Most of them see themselves primarily as civilians, and consequently they tend to be strong promoters of civil supremacy primarily because they see *reformasi* as their golden opportunity, their moment in the sun:

⁷⁸ Personal interview with Inggard Joshua. "Memang pada saat saya di Pemuda Pancasila, ee, teman-teman di partai politik itu melihat saya dengan apa yang saya lakukan. Tentu saja, ee, mereka tertarik. Akhirnya saya juga berminat untuk berpolitik. Saya melihat pada saat itu memang platform partai terbaik pada saat itu, yah ... memang ee, Golkar. Tapi setelah saya melihat masuk ke dalam, ternyata, ee, semu. Jadi ee, saya melihat, perlu ada perubahan-perubahan yang menimbulkan rasa persatuan dan kesatuan ee, dengan semangatnya tentu semangat Sumpah Pemuda ya, pada saat itu dimana kita melebur diri, yang banyak suku menjadi satu bangsa!"

⁷⁹ Personal interview with Djoko Purwongembo. "Ini yah, bicara soal dikotomi sipil sama militer ... Kita tidak perlu permasalahan kalau betul-betul amanah konstitusi kita dimana masalah adanya sishankamrata bela negara, wajib bela negara itu diberlakukan maka tidak lagi dikotomi sipil dan militer ... Cuma temen merasa saya ini kayak tentara. Jadi orang pertama kali ngelihat saya pasti paling tidak ini, pangkat ini, Brigjen, Mayjen gitu lho, paling nggak Kolonel. Kira-kira gitu lah. Karena mungkin tampilan saya karena sudah terlatih yah ... Dan kita juga dulu punya yang namanya resimen Yudaputra, uniformnya yah, seperti army, tentara. Tidak seperti organisasi lain ... datang dari mana kita nggak tahu itu keturunan siapa, kasih jaket, pake. Tapi nggak punya militansi, apa, jiwa korpsnya aja nggak ada."

Most of the OKP leaders in the past, were “made” by elites and given positions. Say for example FKPPi, Panca Marga ... They were kids of, eh, the KBA, right? The Big ABRI Family. At the time, in the past, before *reformasi*, opportunities for us civilian kids were, eh, fewer than the opportunities for those from the Big ABRI Family. In the past, a civilian could never amount to much if he wasn’t truly extraordinary. But since *reformasi*, it’s our turn. Kids from civilian families are more able to be successful and important ... Pemuda Pancasila doesn’t look at [your] background. That’s why I wanted to be in it ... Now, in the environment of *reformasi*, the presence of the TNI is starting to be limited and the effect of that for youth organizations is that they are no longer dominated by kids from the KBA. Nowadays, we all have the same chance.⁸⁰

Inggard’s contempt for elite privilege here underscores the fact that the pronounced antipopulism of people like Nurlif is not universally shared by OKP parliamentarians. To be sure, their general disposition is one of distance towards their constituents, but not one of disdain. Most are convinced that they are indeed fighting for their supporters. Even for the positively Aristotelian Nurlif, the enlightened policies of his party are at least nominally designed first and foremost to advance the welfare of the public at large. For the less established, such as Darwin or Bangkit, members are held at arm’s length, not out of condescension, but rather because they cause headaches by making too many demands or asking for too much money. In short, these OKP representatives maintain a distance from their constituents for reasons other than the arrogance ceaselessly expressed—in terms of the stupid masses (*massa bodoh*)—by a self-serving, limited political elite determined to preserve its own privilege. These former junk collectors, small-time traders, and flat-out thugs *are* the *massa*, themselves enjoying the more direct access to power that electoral reform has made available to them. If they then attempt to hold onto the limited sliver of power they have secured for themselves and, in their own minds at least, for their immediate members who fade indistinctly into their constituents, then it should come as no surprise that the justifications they make in defense of their new authority regurgitate certain aspects of the elitist authoritarian discourse that strongly marked their prior political education and experience.

ALL IN THE FAMILY, AT CROSS PURPOSES

OKP leaders have by no means thrown their fates entirely into the party system. Many regard positions in the executive and the bureaucracy to hold more promising long-term prospects, both in terms of personal and group advantage and in terms of

⁸⁰ Inggard Joshua. “Kebanyakan pimpinan-pimpinan OKP masa lampau, itu orang-orang yang memang sudah difigurkan oleh elit-elit untuk menapak di sana. Katakanlah kalau misalnya FKPPi, Panca Marga ... Jadi kan rupanya kan mereka ini anak-anak, ee, KBA gitu kan. Keluarga Besar ABRI. Jadi, pada saat itu, masa lampau ini yah, sebelum reformasi, memang peluangnya anak-anak sipil ini, ee, lebih kecil daripada peluangnya anak-anak dari keluarga besar ABRI. Jadi kalau ada orang muncul tempo lalu, kalau nggak hebat-hebat betul, dari sipil itu, nggak bakal dia bisa tampil. Tapi setelah reformasi, ee, bergulir. Maka disitulah ee, anak-anak dari keluarga sipil ini, lebih bisa maju dan besar ... Pemuda Pancasila tidak melihat latar belakang daripada ... Makanya saya mau di sana. Karena sudah alam reformasi, sehingga keberadaan TNI sudah mulai dibatasi dan akhirnya berkembang kepada organisasi kepemudaan itu ee, tidak dikuasai lagi dari anak-anak dari KBA ... Jaman sekarang betul, ee, mempunyai kesempatan yang sama ...”

pushing for more fundamental structural changes. Alliances and rivalries among OKP leaders are not confined to particular institutions, but cut across them. Some boast of their attachment to extensive alliance networks that have grown out of old OKP associations. Bulog chief Widjanarko Puspoyo is a leading executive of the Foundation for National Brotherhood Harmony (Yayasan Kerukunan Persaudaraan Kebangsaan), which he described:

As it turns out, my network is very much alive, it's a national network, and up to now there are around nine hundred people still active in local government, in local parliaments, as *bupatis*, as parliamentarians, governors, vice-governors. I think this network is extraordinary. This is one of the fruits I picked from my education socializing with those in AMPI for ten years. AMPI truly raised me.⁸¹

Standing OKP rivalries, too, have been played out in some bizarre ways in the new political environment. For example, the old turf wars in Jakarta between Pemuda Pancasila and Pemuda Panca Marga coalesced in a public feud between Jakarta Governor Sutiyoso and State Minister of Youth and Sports, Adhyaksa Dault, over the fate of the Menteng Stadium, the colonial-era football stadium, home to the Persija football association since the 1950s. On the surface, this was a familiar story of public and private interests in conflict, with the municipal government determined to make way for a fifty-five billion rupiah private-development project that would provide retail space and a four-story parking garage.⁸² Publicly, the dispute between the Minister of Youth and Sports and the governor turned on whether the latter had the legal authority to raze the stadium, which the former insisted fell under his jurisdiction.⁸³ After the Pamong Praja municipal police demolished the stadium on July 26, 2006, Adhyaksa threatened to prosecute Governor Sutiyoso for violating the sports law, an offense that he warned carried a five-year jail term and a twenty billion rupiah fine.

This high-level executive bickering can be read as a manifestation of surviving PP-PPM turf wars. PP old-timers in Jakarta long dominated the leadership of Persija

⁸¹ Personal interview with Widjanarko Puspoyo. "Ternyata network saya itu hidup, network saya itu jaringan nasional, dan sampai sekarang itu ada kurang lebih sembilan ratus orang yang masih aktif di pemerintahan daerah, di DPRD, apakah dia bupati, apakah anggota DPRD, ketua, gubernur, wakil gubernur. Saya lihat jaringan ini luar biasa. Itulah salah satu buah yang saya petik dari pendidikan saya bersosialisasi saya dengan mereka di AMPI selama sepuluh tahun. Jadi yang membesarkan saya itu adalah AMPI." The leaders of YKPK were Ret. Lt. Gen. Bambang Triantoro and the late Ansor/NU/PPP/PKB politician and former defense minister Matori Abdul Jalil, secretary general of YKPK. Widjanarko was vice-secretary general of the organization. Jun Honna, "Military Ideology in Response to Democratic Pressure During the Late Suharto Era: Political and Institutional Contexts," *Indonesia* 67 (April 1999): 77–126.

⁸² "Historic Dutch-built Soccer Stadium Demolished in Indonesian Capital," *AFP*, July 26, 2006. "Persija Park Demolition Starts Despite Land Dispute," *The Jakarta Post*, July 27, 2006. "Minister Seeks VP Backup in Wrangle with Sutiyoso," *The Jakarta Post*, July 28, 2006. "Demolition Leaves Persija Homeless," *The Jakarta Post*, August 1, 2006. "Minister, Governor Fail to Discuss Stadium Dispute," *The Jakarta Post*, August 2, 2006.

⁸³ Personal interview with Adhyaksa Dault, Jakarta, September 26, 2006. Dault cited from memory Law Number 3, Article 67, which "forbids anyone from removing or transferring the function of sports facilities that are national or regional government assets without the recommendation of the minister or without the permission or consent of the relevant authorities."

and considered the stadium among PP's main territorial bases in Jakarta. Meanwhile, the head of the Jakarta Public Order Office (Dinas Tramtib), Harianto Badjoeri, is also the long-time Jakarta head of PPM and a professed personal rival of PP chief Yapto, whom he has boasted he'd clobber in a fist fight.⁸⁴ It must have been with some delight that Harianto deployed the Pamong Praja police units formally under his command to oversee and participate in the stadium demolition and the destruction of Persija property. Persija officials took it personally. One Persija trainer complained: "The city administration has committed a brutal act against the stadium. Many of our trophies ... were damaged ... and even the computer ... is missing."⁸⁵ A sixty-something-year-old man who had made a living working the parking territory in front of the demolished stadium told me that "all our PP friends turned out to defend Persija ... But what could we do, we were facing the Number One Man [Sutiyoso]. Even the minister gave in. Let alone the likes of us. Empty talk. In the end, lost in the wind."⁸⁶ While Adhyaksa sided with Persija and, by extension, PP, he ultimately washed his hands of the affair: "I didn't agree with the eviction [and] the demolition of the Menteng Stadium, ya know? They just tore it apart! We're talking about a higher law here. But this rumble [between the Persija and the Pamong Praja] is none of our business any more."⁸⁷ Some weeks after blowing off steam, Adhyaksa and Sutiyoso were broadcast on TV embracing each other at a boxing match.

Though Adhyaksa backed down, his challenge to Sutiyoso illustrates the new-found self-confidence of youth-group politicians in open confrontations with the old guard. Many such figures sincerely see themselves as the true reformers, having the experience, the inside knowledge, and, most of all, the guts to accomplish what liberal activists cannot or will not. Erstwhile North Sumatra KNPI chief Firdaus presented a thoroughly convincing argument based on this logic at a midnight strategy session on the patio of former North Sumatra provincial PP chief Ajib Syah.⁸⁸ In the presence of Ajib, and surrounded by half a dozen stocky operators and

⁸⁴ Prior to holding this position, Harianto was head of the Jakarta tourism office, which licenses pubs and discos. See Ryter, "Pemuda Pancasila." During Ramadan in 2006, Pamong Praja police made preemptive strikes against street walkers and discos, possibly to edge in on seasonal protection rackets, which might otherwise have been operated by FPI or FBR.

⁸⁵ "Demolition Leaves Persija Homeless," *The Jakarta Post*, August 1, 2006.

⁸⁶ Personal interview with Oras, Jakarta, September 29, 2006. "Semua kawan-kawan PP turun membela Persija ... Tapi apa boleh buat, kami ngadap orang nomor satu. Menteri aje nunduk. Apa lagi kita-kita ... Ngomongan aje. 'abis hilang di angin." It is ironic that Pemuda Pancasila, leading executors of land clearing in Jakarta from the late 1980s to the late 1990s, is now falling victim to it. In a 2004 case, eight hectares of land in Jatinegara Kaum that PP-affiliated residents maintained had been bequeathed to them by a general was claimed by a company owned by Probosutedjo, and all buildings on it were later razed. "Terkait Kasus Tanah, 3 Hakim PN Jaktim Diperiksa," *Media Indonesia*, June 9, 2004.

⁸⁷ Personal interview with Adhyaksa Dault. "Persoalan pengusiran oleh Pemda, pembongkaran Stadion Menteng itu yang saya tidak setuju. Gitu kan? Main bongkar aje. Ini kan undang-undang, lebih tinggi. Tapi kalau soal berantemnya itu, ya, itu bukan urusan kita lagi."

⁸⁸ Personal interview with Firdaus, Medan, October 21, 2006. Firdaus assumed the North Sumatra KNPI leadership with an Ansor (NU) background, making him an anomaly in a provincial KNPI dominated by the Golkar-oriented OKP. Ajib Syah, an ethnic Arab businessman, has played politics quietly since 1998, the year when his son was attacked by IPK. He has since positioned himself as a king-maker to political aspirants of all stripes. Firdaus referred to him as a *begawan*, or ascetic, someone above partisan politics. It has since

a nodding, turbaned cleric, Firdaus delivered what amounted to a two-hour campaign speech for governor of what he called "Greater Sumatra." In global strokes, he praised young politicians from England to Poland to Iran who had the courage to oppose their corrupt establishments. Untainted by First World arrogance, the global youth are destined to stand shoulder-to-shoulder and change the world, he declaimed, adding that "in the future, necktie-wearing politicians will be history!" In Indonesia, he continued, it is the OKP leaders who best represent this revolutionary young generation. They are uniquely positioned to wipe away the rotten old order because, like himself, they know all the dirty tricks and, most of all, are not afraid to stand up to the army. Firdaus backed up his bombast with proof: for the past several years, he said, he and Ajib had been running a foundation whose mission it was to collect and analyze data on political corruption. The foundation, which he boasted "works like the CIA," had amassed a vast database of evidence on corruption, data intended to be used primarily as ammunition for his gubernatorial campaign. Firdaus also argued that OKP leaders are most revolutionary when holding executive, rather than legislative, positions. Legislators owe their backers too much, whereas executives have much more latitude to act independently, he claimed. Where executive branch politicians have OKP backgrounds, corruption has decreased significantly, he said.⁸⁹ However idealistic his professed vision and however exaggerated his assessments, Firdaus no doubt articulated both a degree of ambition and a sense of mission shared by the more strategically minded of his OKP contemporaries.

CONCLUSION

It should come as no great surprise that these OKP leaders were poised to assume leading places on the political scene in post-Suharto Indonesia. In their dealings with each other, with their military backers, and with their challengers, they gained practical political experience in negotiating interests from the streets to the barracks and even to the palace. Moreover, they were repeatedly reminded that they represented the young generation, a generation destined eventually to step onto center stage, as much as this nurtured expectation was just as routinely managed, contained, or deferred. Somewhat more curious, however, is the fact that as they were educated to accept the key ideological precepts of the New Order, they simultaneously convinced themselves that they had something new, something unique to their generation and predicament, to offer.⁹⁰ Thus, the discourse of *reformasi* represented at once a new vocabulary, which they needed to accommodate strategically for the sake of their own political survival, and also their most profound calling—a heroic project that they were destined to carry out. Assuming the role of popular representative, in and of itself, was nothing foreign to them; indeed, they tended to understand fighting for their "peeps" as their central undertaking, a

been rumored that Ajib himself intends to run for vice-governor, which would presumably make Firdaus his campaign strategist. It turns out that Ajib ran for and won a provincial (DPRD-I) seat in the 2009 parliamentary elections.

⁸⁹ Firdaus cited his own analysis, which he claimed demonstrated that 86 percent of North Sumatran *bupatis* have OKP backgrounds. He did not explain how he measured reductions in corruption.

⁹⁰ One might note that this seems to repeat the conceit of the 1965 generation, maybe the 1945 generation, and possibly "generations" in national politics more generally.

mission that had earned them the respect that made them bosses and, now, a mission that the new era would allow them to accomplish more effectively. Their response to the idea of constituencies was less enthusiastic. Constituents' demands, when deemed excessive, were perceived as pesky complaints that needed to be contained rather than as needs which might be met with legislative solutions. Here they tended to adopt the patriarchal persona that was just as much a component of their political education.

Even so, there is something notably genuine about the very fact that these gangster popular representatives are, for the most part, unshielded from their public. Generally lacking handlers, they often literally need to duck to avoid being hit up for cash by those in their now more expansive network of "boys." Such scenes are hard to imagine in the "democratic" polities of places like the United States, where populist politicians boast of proximity to constituencies but can retire to private chambers with much greater ease. Campaign stories of moving encounters with humble Joe Everyman simply do not play in Indonesia. An appreciation of such interactions and of the significance of the vernacular through which they are articulated demands the sort of ethnographic approach to politics that this volume advocates.⁹¹ Through such an approach, we can also better guard against the temptation to pronounce the state of affairs in Indonesia as a failed or failing implementation of democratic principles. Indeed, it should suggest that, rather than become shackled with the problem of traveling categories (such as democracy) that we place into abeyance such categorical abstracts (especially when deployed to evaluate success in implementing them) in favor of more inductive studies of power.⁹²

GLOSSARY

- ABRI Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia, the Indonesian Armed Forces; title used prior to 1998
- AMPG Angkatan Muda Partai Golkar, Golkar Party Young Generation; existed alongside AMPI after 1998, reflecting splits within Golkar
- AMPI Angkatan Muda Pembaharuan Indonesia, Indonesian Renewal Young Generation; official Golkar youth wing
- asas tunggal* sole basis; 1985 regulation requiring all organizations to accept the state doctrine, Pancasila, as their sole ideological basis

⁹¹ George Steinmetz, *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Joel S. Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, *State Power and Social Force: Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁹² Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review* 64.4 (1970). This sort of political anthropology would help us understand recent US presidential elections or the politics of war contracting in Iraq much better than do exit polls, surveys, and statistics.

BAKIN	Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara, State Intelligence Coordinating Body; founded in 1970, led at its height by Ali Moertopo
BMI	Banteng Muda Indonesia, Indonesian Young Bulls; a PDI-P youth wing
DPC	Dewan Pimpinan Cabang, Branch Leadership Assembly; PP's municipal / district-level leadership
DPD	Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, Regional Representatives' Council; representatives of regions to the DPR-RI
DPRD-I	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah-I, the Regional People's Assembly I; provincial-level assembly
DPRD-II	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah-II, the Regional People's Assembly II; municipal- or district-level assembly; in a city, like a city council; since Jakarta is its own province, DPRD-II serves geographic sectors of it
DPR-RI	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia, the People's Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia
FKPPI	Forum Komunikasi Putra Putri Purnawirawan ABRI, Communication Forum for the Sons and Daughters of the Pensioners of the Indonesian Armed Forces; the "I" referred to ABRI, not "Indonesia"; changed to TNI/POLRI after 1998
FPI	Front Pembela Islam, Islamic Defenders' Front
Gapensi	Gabungan Pelaksana Nasional Seluruh Indonesia, All-Indonesian National Implementers' Collective; contractors' association
Golkar	Golongan Karya, Works and Deeds Groups / Functional Groups; the state party until 1998
GPK(1)	Gerakan Pemuda Kabah, Kabah Pemuda Movement; youth wing of PPP, delegitimized in the 1980s by the introduction of GPK(2)
GPK(2)	Gerakan / Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan, Security Disrupters' Movement / Gang; see GPK(1)
Gus Dur	Abdurachman Wahid, nickname; NU head and president of Indonesia from 1999 to 2001
HMI	Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, Islamic Students' Association; a main supplier of young politicians since the 1960s, affiliated with Muhammadiyah

IPK	Ikatan Pemuda Karya, Youth Works and Deeds Association; youth-group splinter of PP, unique to North Sumatra, led until 2009 by gambling kingpin Olo Panggabean (1941–2009)
KAPI	Kesatuan Aksi Pelajar Indonesia, Indonesian Pupils' Action Unit; unit variously translated as "commando"
KBA	Keluarga Besar ABRI, Extended Armed Forces Family; everyone in the armed forces and their relatives
<i>ketua</i>	leader, boss
<i>kino</i>	the pillar groups of Golkar, including SOKSI, Kosgoro, MKGR
KNPI	Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia, Indonesian National Youth Council; set up in 1973 with support from Ali Moertopo
MPR	Majelis Perwakilan Rakyat, People's Representative Council; the highest legislative body, now effectively a bicameral parliament
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama, Awakening of Religious Teachers; largest "traditionalist" Islamic organization
OKP	Organisasi Kemasyarakatan Pemuda, Youth Social Organizations; introduced after <i>asas tunggal</i> (1985 "sole basis" regulation) to depoliticize youth groups and detach them from party affiliations
<i>ormas</i>	abbreviation for <i>organisasi masyarakat</i> , "social organization"; generally refers to a political organization even though called "social"
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional, National Mandate Party; party founded by Amien Rais
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang, Star Moon Party
PBR	Partai Bintang Reformasi, Reform Star Party
PD	Partai Demokrat, Democratic Party; SBY's party
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle; splinter of PDI led by Megawati Sukarnoputri
PDS	Partai Damai Sejahtera, Welfare Peace Party
PG	Partai Golkar, Golkar Party
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, National Awakening Party; NU party led by Gus Dur

PKP	Partai Keadilan dan Persatuan, Justice and Unity Party; failed Golkar splinter party (1999)
PKPB	Partai Karya Peduli Bangsa, Concern for the Nation Works and Deeds Party, aka Concern for the Nation Functional Party; supported by Tutut Suharto, the daughter of Suharto
PKS	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Welfare Justice Party; Islamic party with a reputation for attracting grassroots support
POLRI	Polisi Republik Indonesia, the Police of the Indonesian Republic; separated from the TNI after 1998
PP	Pemuda Pancasila, Pancasila Youth
PP	Partai Pelopor, Pioneer Party
PPDK	Partai Persatuan Demokrasi Kebangsaan, National Democracy Unity Party
PPM	Pemuda Panca Marga, Veterans' Youth, or Youth of the Military Doctrine; Panca Marga are five principles adhered to by the military
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, Unity Development Party; official Islamic party of the New Order, usually called P-Three
REI	Real Estate Indonesia; real-estate developers' association
SBY	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Indonesian president since 2004, former adjutant of Suharto
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia, the Indonesian National Army; title for the Indonesian armed forces

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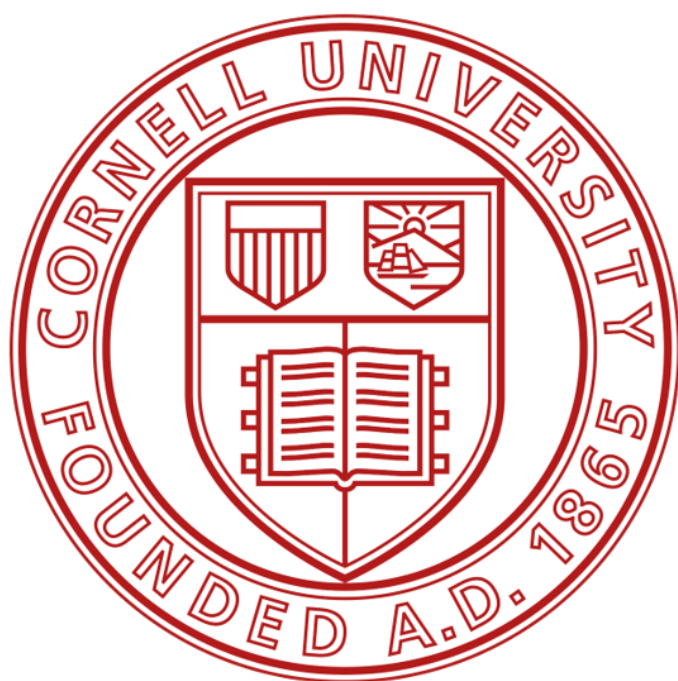
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